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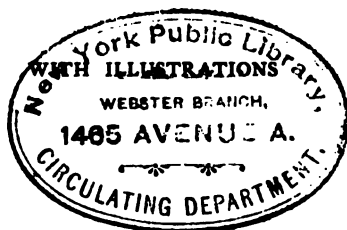
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"That's one end of the stays'l halliards."

OUT OF GLOUCESTER

BY
JAMES B. CONNOLLY



CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
NEW YORK

1902

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
A CHASE OVERNIGHT	I
ON THE ECHO O' THE MORN	31
FROM REYKJAVIK TO GLOUCESTER	69
A FISHERMAN OF COSTLA	93
TOMMIE OHLSEN'S WESTERN PASSAGE	131
CLANCY	191

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ILLUSTRATIONS

"That's one end of the stays'l halyards" . . .	<i>Frontispiece</i>
She's an able, handsome lady,	FACING
And she's go-o-ing home	PAGE
	10
"I cuts away the starboard oar below"	58
The "Crow's Nest"	72
Leapin' from the top of one sea to the top of another .	86
"Pole her off to the end of the quay".	104
"Look across now," said Gerald, "that's Arran you see ahead"	110
"Any worse than the one you got on now?" . . .	262

Lights out and southern courses,
Let her head come 'round,
Devil take the British forces—
Here's the Echo, homeward bound.

She left Egg Isle at sunset,
And to Le Have at dawn
A-sailin' down the wind
Came the Echo o' the Morn.

Two cutters and a cruiser
Chased the Echo on her way—
They said: "She can't get by us,
We'll get her in the Bay."
—(*From the ballad of "The Echo o' the Morn."*)

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A Chase Overnight

THE Gloucester seining fleet had been cruising off Georges Bank, when one of those New England north-easters came swooping down on them. Thereupon, as nothing was to be gained by hanging on (you cannot set for mackerel in a gale), every vessel in the fleet made fast its dory in the waist, looked to the painter of the seine-boat astern, and then seventy or eighty seiners took on a beautiful slant and made a roaring regatta of it to Provincetown, the nearest port of refuge.

In the early morning hours this gale had struck in on Georges. It was somewhere along in the middle of the afternoon when the first of the fleet showed their noses past the little light-house that marks the entrance to the harbor of Provincetown. One after the other they came leaping past the light. It was a quick look to see how things lay, a haul over for one last leg, a rush across the harbor, a shoot into the wind, and then, after the fashion of tired gulls with wet

A Chase Overnight

wings, a lowering of sodden sails and a thankful settling into handy anchorages.

By dusk of this stormy day most of the seining fleet was safely in. Of this Provincetown was soon made aware, for among these ten or twelve hundred robust fishermen there had to be the inevitable boisterous percentage with some tormenting energy to work off and with no desire to be hushed. Such started in at sundown; and from then on, until dawn of next morning in many cases, they did what they could to keep that staid hamlet from drifting into a too early sleep.

But, after all, only a small number of the fishermen were of the riotous kind. The greater part, indeed, were sensible men, who preferred to stay aboard their own vessel for the evening, or to drop over and see an old shipmate or two on some other craft near by. These knew of old the delights of a fo'c's'le night in a snug harbor, with no watch to keep, no work to do; where you have only to talk or listen, to "smoke up" and "mug up"; to keep your pipe going and to help yourself to hot coffee off the stove and good grub out of the locker; to enjoy yourself to the utmost in that region of bliss, where there is no hurry and all things are dry; to let your soul simmer in that delicious atmosphere of tuneful

A Chase Overnight

song, stirring story, and reflective blue smoke ; to harken to the wailing of the winds without and to know, in delightful, reposeful security no less, that this time they are wailing for somebody else.

These deep-sea fishermen, in their heartiness of hospitality, are the chosen of the Lord. With them, the best in the locker is ever ready for the caller, be he castaway stranger, chance acquaintance, or cherished friend. Of the ways of their mates all fishermen are, of course, aware. And so, when two, who had been mildly celebrating ashore, dropped into their dory at the end of a long, planked dock, and set out in the direction of the harbor lights in Provincetown this night, it is likely that they were anticipating an agreeable finish to their evening. It was only midnight and there were yet some cheering hours to sun-up, when, by skippers' orders, the seining fleet would be standing out to sea again.

One of these two was a big man, "able-looking," a fisherman would have said ; the build of the other signified less. The big man was easily in command. He sat on the after thwart, set the stroke, directed all movements, and attended to the hailing. It was well he owned a voice of rare power ; one of only moderate force would have succumbed early to the opposition of the shrieking gale and the reluctance of comfortable people

A Chase Overnight

below to come up and answer bothersome questions.

They were looking, it would seem, for that reliable craft, the William Walker, which all men should know by her new-painted green sides, with gold stripe along the run, white mast-heads, and blue seine-boat towing. But a description dealing merely in color is but a poor guide at night, as many, many disturbed crews explained.

When the two left the long dock, the position of the William Walker had been plainly defined. "No'west by nothe—about; and ten minutes steady rowin'—about." Could anything be clearer? So, when the two set out, their confidence had been a perfect thing. The big man, indeed, taking account of the blackness, had said: "We don't even need to get near enough to see her, Martin. Just a smell of her and we'll know her——" which was possibly true, but unfortunately, as was explained later, the wind was off shore that night.

So round and round they rowed. The big man threw his voice into the recesses of comfortable bunks, and from these, wrathful men, who desired not to be disturbed, had to climb out and ascend to rain-swept decks, to answer curious questions as to the location of a lively schooner, the William Walker by name, with green-

A Chase Overnight

painted sides and gold stripe along the run, with white mast-heads, and blue seine-boat towing. The searchers were treated to some plain language after the first round of their uncertain route, notably from over the rails of that bunch of fine, able fishermen, the Eliza Parkhurst, the Norumbega, the Grayling, the Harry Belden, the Richard Wainright, all of Gloucester, and particularly when they disturbed the slumbers of those redoubtable old hookers, the Herald of the Morning and the Good Will to Men, also of Gloucester, from where, it is said, they hailed as privateersmen in their palmy days.

The two men in the dory had made the fleet pretty well acquainted with the distinguishing marks of their vessel, with the green-painted sides and the gold stripe along the run, with the white mast-heads and the blue seine-boat towing, but to no effect; and many times had they robustly hailed, "Aho-oy the Wil-l-iam Walker," but no William Walker rose up to greet them from out of the darkness of the night.

It was while they were waiting for the anathematic responses from the deck of the Good Will to Men (it was the third series from her deck), waiting for the voice of wrath to die down the wind, that the big man came to a final decision.

Resting dejectedly on his oars, the big man

A Chase Overnight

said: "Seventy-odd seiners here and every blessed one of 'em with a riding-light up, and which is ours, Martin? It's as bad as the candles and the lookin'-glasses goin' 'round, ain't it? Look at 'em."

"Yes, 'tis kind of puzzlin'. What'll we do now?"

"Do? We'll go aboard the next vessel we find awake. We made a good try and even the skipper couldn't kick now. Pick out any one where there's a light below and we'll go aboard."

"Well, there's a fellow to wind'ard. I can't see onto her deck from here, but they must have a light below, for they're noisy enough for a christening. Listen to 'em."

"Yes. What's that they're singin'? Catch it?"

"Wait; they'll start again. There, hear it?"

Being to the leeward of the vessel indicated, the words came clearly enough to the men in the dory when they stopped rowing for a stroke or two.

She's the schooner Lucy Foster,
She's a seiner out of Gloucester,
She's an able, handsome lady,
She can go.

The song seemed to inspire the big man. He at once set a stroke that made his dory mate pant. He explained by saying, "Martin, boy, but I must get into that. I don't know who they are,

A Chase Overnight

but I used to be seine-heaver on the Lucy. Hit her up." He put his broad back into the rowing and hummed the words while the chorus went on :

The way she'll walk to wind'ard,
You would think that nothing hindered,
She's an able, handsome lady,
See her go.

That brought them to the side of the vessel. The big man was over the rail with a vault and a "Look to the painter, you, Martin." Onward went the fo'c's'le choir :

For—

She can sail to set you crazy,
Not a timber in her's lazy,
She's the handsome Lucy Foster
And she's go-o-ing home.

The big man was down the gangway in time to swell the great tide that surged up to all throats for that last line.

"And she's go-o-ing home," he roared. "That was the girl, the Lucy. Hulloh, Johnnie Hardy ! When'd you get in ? Hulloh, Dannie—hulloh, Mike—hulloh, Ezra—hulloh, everybody. Drive her again, boys. Drive her now." He swirled his great arm through the thick smoke by way of marking time, and the whole fo'c's'le, waving pipes or mugs to add emphasis, followed him with

A Chase Overnight

extreme unction. Men sitting on lockers, men lounging in bunks, men standing by the galley stove, made a stop in their eating, drinking, or smoking, to add vigor to the chant:

When she swings the main boom over
And she feels the wind abaft,
The way she'll walk to Gloucester'll
Make a steamer look a raft.

"Hurroo, fellows! Drive her! Here's the best part of it. Now!——

Oh, the Lucy's left the ground,
And there's nothing standing 'round
Can hold the Lucy Foster
When the Lucy's homeward bound.

"She was the girl, I tell you; warn't she, Johnnie Hardy? All hands, now, heave away and help the Lucy home. Now then—whoop!——

For she's the Lucy Foster,
She's a seiner out of Gloucester,
She's an able, handsome lady,
And she's go-o-ing home.

"That's what, boys. Let Martin and me mug up and get over near the fire to dry out, and we'll have it again."

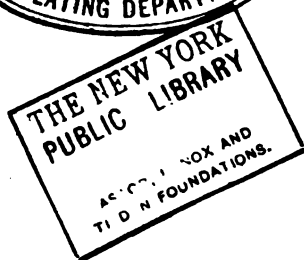
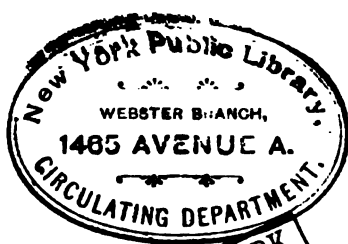
"And when did you get in, Steve Perkins?" shouted an uproarious half-dozen at once.

"Just afore dark. But we went ashore, Mar-



She's an able handsome lady.





A Chase Overnight

tin and me, and we've been pulling all over the bay tryin' to find the William Walker again. Seen anything of——"

"Aho-o-oy, aho-o-oy!" roared Hardy. "Seen anything of the William Walker 'round here? Green-painted sides, with a gold stripe along the run, white mast-heads, and a little blue seine-boat towin'? Ho, ho," roared Hardy.

"Blessed Lord! How'd you know?"

"How? Have we no ears, man? And that was you, Steve? If we'd known, we'd have hove you a line. But we only says, 'Who in hell's that crazy man?' and didn't mind."

"That so? Well, what vessel's this?"

"Henry Clay Parker."

"No? The old Henry Clay?"

"Yes, sir, the old Henry C. Been fixed up down here a bit. New woodwork here and there, and a few planks for'ard since that last jam-up she had. Changed her looks some inside here, but she's the same old Henry you used to know, Steve."

"Good old Henry. The only vessel that ever beat the Lucy. Remember that, Johnnie?"

"M-m—. That was a race, that one. I was telling the boys here awhile ago—the date brought it up—and I got started telling what the Lucy could do. Five year ago to-night it was,



A Chase Overnight

Steve, and a night like to-night, outside. Blow? M-m——.”

“It did blow, didn’t it? There’s lots of us glad to be here to-night with our gear safe; but that night we came through with everything that’d hang onto the hoops, didn’t we, Johnnie?”

“Yes, sir. And it’s queer now, Steve, you was on the Parker that time and I was on the Lucy.”

“Yes; you with the Irishman and me with Billie Simms. There was a desp’rate pair of fishermen for carryin’ sail, Billie and the Irishman, and if an able seaman ever sailed out of Gloucester (and there’s been one or two out of there, I guess), there was a pair of ’em. And that Irishman could sail a vessel, couldn’t he?”

“Could he? Man, but he was a driver. But he was pretty shrewd, too, Stevie, outside of sailin’ a vessel. He’d molded in thirty tons of lead next to her keel ’bout a month before that race, prayin’ to catch the Parker in a breeze.”

“Didn’t we hear of it? And when Billie put into Halifax two trips before that—that time he said he’d have to get a new seine—didn’t he make it his particular business to lay pig-iron enough under her floor to stiffen a kettle-bot-tomed coaster? Oh, you never heard anybody

A Chase Overnight

say, I guess, that Billie Simms didn't have all his senses any time, did you? And so, when the Lucy stood down to us that evenin', Billie began to grin to himself, for he knew what the Irishman was after."

"I mind the time well, Stevie. The Irishman sings out: 'Hello, Billie, you'll be headin' to the west'ard soon by the look o' things?'

"'Pretty soon, perhaps,' says Billie.

"'That's what I was thinkin',' says the Irishman, 'with this nice little breeze working eastherly. I had it in my mind to run to market myself. And I says to myself, now I've got a couple of hundred barrells nice fat mackerel below, and, by the looks o' things, Billie Simms he's got a couple of hundred, too. Why, we ought to be fine company goin' home, thinks I, and while we're about it, we might try tacks on the way home, or have a fine run of it, if the wind stays eastherly.'

"'You mean you want to race the Lucy again the Henry?' says Billie.

"'Och, no. 'Tisn't me would be wantin' to make such a boast as to sail the little Lucy agin a big, able vessel like the Par-r-ker, Billie.'

"And mind you, Stevie, they were the one tonnage—the Lucy a bit deeper, but the Henry a mite wider.

A Chase Overnight

“ ‘When it comes to heavy weather,’ goes on the blarneyin’ Irishman, ‘the whole fleet knows the Par-r-ker, but just for the pure love of it, or for a bit of money, if you like it better, we might satisfy ourselves on a disputed p’int or two of sailin’.’ ”

“ ‘You mean to race from here to Boston—to T wharf?’ asked Billie.

“ ‘Well, now, it might look like a race, but seein’ that it’s fair wind comin’ and we’re both goin’ to market anyway,’ and the Irishman and Billie went on—you know how they went on, Stevie.”

“Yes. They both wanted to race bad enough, but the Irishman wanted to have it to say afterward that he didn’t come lookin’ for a race, and Billie wanted to make it look as though the Irishman caught him kind of unready like and forced him into it—there’d be more credit in winning, if they could make people believe something like that.

“And both of them primed for it, with ballast just right for a blow, and fish and salt stowed as careful below as if it was for th’ America’s cup. Well, to shorten up the story, boys, they bet their share of the trip; that is, what would be coming to them from their share as one of the crew, their skipper’s percentage and their share

A Chase Overnight

as owner—each of them owned half his vessel. That was it, warn't it, Johnnie?"

"That's right. Twelve hundred and odd dollars apiece put up on that race. And the Irishman thought it was just as good as his before they started at all. When we put after the Parker, he says: 'B'ys, there'll be somethin' for all hands out o' this. Nobody turns in to-night. Crack everything onto her now, when she comes about—tops'ls, stays'l, big jib and balloon—and we'll put after the Par-r-ker. There's a man knows the Georges, Billie Simms. He'll do for our pilot and we'll keep him in sight.' The Irishman was only two years out of Galway then, and he wasn't acquainted with the Banks like your skipper, Steve."

"As far as that went, Johnnie, there warn't many of 'em knew the Georges like old Billie. And you'd better believe that when Billie 'greed to race he knew just what he was about. He had no sentimental notions about the Henry Clay. He knew well's anybody that the Parker couldn't hold the Lucy Foster in fair, straight sailin'. He said as much when he pointed her up and takes a look at the Lucy over into the wind astern.

"'Boys,' says Billie, 'it's goin' to be a gale in a hurry, the way things is lookin' now. And there ain't no vessel of her tonnage afloat 'll beat

A Chase Overnight

the Lucy Foster into port with the Irishman aboard in heavy weather. They talk about her bein' a summer-weather boat and all that sort of foolishness, but I know better. She'll stand up if she's druv to it and there's the man'll drive her to it. But for all that we'll come pretty near beatin' the Irishman t'night. Put her kites on and let her roll into it. We'll hang onto 'em's long's we can.'

"So we put on every stitch and she began to roll into it for fair. We could just make out the Lucy then. That was about seven o'clock and we'd just got our lights up."

"I remember it, Steve. We was trailin' your green light's close as we could. The Irishman said he was going to stay on your quarter till we were off the Banks. Once clear of the shoals he said he was goin' to say good-by."

"Yes. Billie figured the Irishman'd play it about that way. You know what real shoal spots there is all along to the west'ard of where we were then. Billie knew them so well that he had a chart of his own. He had things down on that chart that weren't down on any gover'ment chart. Soon's we got fair away he gave me the wheel and went down and got out that private chart of his and began to study it on the cabin floor. He had the lead kept goin', too. Billie was a 'genious

A Chase Overnight

cuss with charts. He had red, blue, and green colored ink on this one for diff'rent shoals. One bad shoal was all in red; sixteen feet of water's all there was there. Billie kept his finger on that spot a long time and studied all 'round it. Every once in a while he'd sing out, 'See what's under us now,' and Archie Nickerson'd heave the lead and sing out what it was there. And Billie'd say, 'Keep her as she is for a while, Steve,' and I'd keep her jammed up to it, almost due no'the—'bout half a point east. We was certainly goin' along then.

"Bime-by, Billie comes up from his chart and takes a look at the bottom of the lead and begins to study. Pretty soon he sings out all at once: 'Stand ready to blow out the side-lights when I give the word—a man to each and both together. Steve,'—he turns to me—'you and me'll hold the wheel the rest of this night. We'll let her go off now four points good. Yes, more yet—there—'bout no'west. Let her run that way. Now let that lead go again there. We'll shake up the Irishman afore a great while.'

"Then the lead goes and we gets twenty fathom. Pretty soon comes fifteen fathom. Then it comes fourteen, thirteen—twelve—eleven—ten-n-n. When it got to ten fathom it held awhile. We was thinkin' you fellows on the

A Chase Overnight

Lucy, Johnnie, was feelin' kind o' queer 'bout then—ten fathom and shoalin'. Of course you kept the lead goin'?

"You better believe we kept it goin' and watched it comin'. When it got down to ten fathom the Irishman began to get interested. 'Ten fathom, is it?' he says. 'Faith, it's deep enough in itself, but that's gin'rally as shoal as I sail my own vessel at night in a blow on Georges. But Billie knows where he's goin' or if he don't, then he ought to.' Then we got nine fathom. He didn't say anything. When it came eight, he didn't open his head, either; but he begins to watch the compass and from that to lookin' ahead after the Parker's green light—we could see your starboard light all the time, we being to wind'ard. When it comes seven fathom, he begins to get warmed up. 'Blessed Mother,' he says, 'but Billie Simms will be taking us off Georges by a short cut. Keep the lead hove and—up for'ard there—don't lose sight of the Par-r-ker's light.'"

"And how'd he take it when it got still shoaler?"

"When we sings out 'Si-i-ix,' he only says 'Skatin' pur-rty close, that, b'ys.' And then we says 'Fi-i-ive,' and we roars it out, because we were beginning to get worried, knowing the desp'rate kind of a man he was. But he only walks

A Chase Overnight

backward and for'ard, nervous like, between the house and the rail to wind'ard and says, 'Well, b'ys, it's but six inches in draught betune us, and what's six inches?—where there's a channel for the Par-r-ker we'll find one for the Lucy. Hould as near in her wake as you can '—to Archie Drum at the wheel. 'Don't let her light get away from you, Archie b'y, or we'll be bakin' in pur-r-gatory before mor-r-nin'.'

"Then we sung out—'Fo-our and a ha-a-alf-f!' and then—'Fo-o-our-r! Thre-e-e and a ha-a-alf-f, THRE-E-E AND A HA-A-ALF-F'—we hollered it twice, just to wake him up to it. In twenty-one feet of water and it shoalin' and we drawin' fifteen! and goin' into it at about fourteen knots an hour. The Irishman runs for'ard at that, jumps into the fore riggin' and looks ahead. We gets three fathom. We roared it out so you could hear us a mile, I guess, and then——"

"The Parker's lights went out, Johnnie."

"Yes, just then I guess it was, Stevie; for the lookout hollered out somethin' and the Irishman comes jumpin' back aft.

"'Hard up, hard up!' he yells to Archie. 'Swing her off, swing her off, the Parker's gone under—Billie drove her to it, by hell! Swing her off, or we'll find bottom too! Let jibs, tops'l, and stays'l tacks and sheets run! Turn loose

A Chase Overnight

balloon halliards and take in on downhaul ! Stand by to ease fore and main sheets ! Jump to it, b'ys, jump to it !' Well, sir, I don't know what-ever saved that vessel from capsizing with the sail she had on. We worked like streaks, but she had to come 'round in a hurry, and the way that the Irishman and Archie at the wheel drove them spokes up was a caution.

"She laid over to it till the sea was in the companion-way. She laid over so fast that we thought it was all up—rolled over on her side, and so fast that Archie Drum let go the wheel ; let go and would have left it altogether, only the Irishman grits out : ' Hang on, man, hang on. Blessed Mother ! don't you know better than to let her come up with all that water on her deck ? Hold her to it till she gets a chance to roll it over the way it came !' Yes, sir, that was the Irishman for you. He let her have it for fair—buried her under it. We grabbed hold of ring-bolts and sheets to keep from sliding overboard to looard. But she came up. ' I knew she'd come,' says he, ' for 'twas meself that saw to her ballast and she had to come, b'ys—if the ballast didn't shift.' She was sure enough a vessel and we didn't blame the skipper then for the way he was stuck on her. But what did you fellows do on the Parker then, Steve ? "

A Chase Overnight

"Well, when we saw the Lucy's port light work out of sight and then the green light go swingin' across our stern and then the port light again go tearin' away from us, we knew how it had been on the Lucy. How Billie cackled! 'There,' he says, 'he's the Mad Irishman, sure enough; but I'll bet something nice that them three-fathom soundings and our lights goin' out with it made him hop. Ho, ho! and another cable length and he'd been clear over it and in water as safe as the middle of the Atlantic.' Then Billie ordered in the light sails. 'We've been takin' too many chances with them, tryin' to set a pace for the Lucy.' And then what do you suppose he did? Headed her more westerly than she was before. Yes, sir; west no'west—straight for Cape Cod. There was a short cut for you. 'And hold that course till we're by Highland Light,' he says, 'and then we'll put her straight's she'll go for Minot's. Ha, ha!' laughs Billie. We could hear him above the wind—'Think of the Irishman beatin' to the no'th'ard and we gettin' it two points abaft the beam under all we can carry! Ha, ha!' My, but Billie laughed."

"Yes, and we'd ha' been beatin' to the no'th'ard yet, I guess, Steve, if the Irishman hadn't got to thinkin' over the way the Parker went out of sight. It was gettin' on toward midnight.

A Chase Overnight

We'd shortened sail after we thought the Parker went down, and we was feelin' pretty blue, thinkin' of all you fellows gone. We were all up on deck, when all of a sudden the Irishman began to swear. He was swearin' so fast that we couldn't keep up with him—half of it in Irish.

“‘Let her wear 'round,’ he yells, to Dannie Hickey at the wheel. ‘Let her come 'round till the wind's over the quarther. Put her west half no'the—that will be bringin' us to Highland Light. I don't believe that dom Billie Simms is gone down at all. Cr-a-ack on all she's got now, b'ys. We'll get them yet, we'll get the divils yet. Would you think a Christian would play such a thrick? But we'll get them, we'll have them be mor-r-nin'. We'll show them yet what the little gur-rl can do.’”

“You must have come then, Johnnie?”

“Come? Man, she was an ocean liner hooked up. You must know, when the Parker came a hundred and twenty miles or so in nine hours, how we came. Come? She fairly leaped with every for'ard jump. On my soul, I thought she'd pull the spars out of herself. She was boiling along, fair boiling, man. She'd stand up on her rudder and throw her breast at the clouds, then she'd bury her knight-heads under. But she didn't carry all her sail long. That fancy

A Chase Overnight

six-hundred-yard balloon, the sentimental summer-gauze balloon, as the fleet called it, didn't stay on a great while. W-ur-r-up! and 'twas up in the sky. But she went along. 'Can you sail, you little divil, can you sail?' the Irishman kept sayin'. 'We'll show them, we'll show them. Go it, my Lucy, go it.' Man, but we came along. She fair screeched, did the Lucy, that night. Just think of it, Steve—she, with that howling no'the-easter over the quarter and the Parker somewhere ahead! Could they fix things better for her to sail? Yes, sir, she screeched and the Irishman stampin' up and down between the house and the wind'ard rail. And never a let up all that night. I'll bet old Billie was some surprised when he saw us in the mornin'."

"Warn't he! Warn't all of us on the Parker? 'Twas barely sun-up and we were inside Minot's Light, fair in the harbor, you might say, and Billie'd just said: 'Well, boys, I guess we can let up on her now. The wind's jumpin' to the no'west and risin' too. I wonder where the Irishman is now, with his circular no'therly courses.' He hadn't half said that when somebody hollered: 'Hi, skipper, who's that astern?'"

"We all looked and damned if there warn't the Lucy. She warn't too plain—it was a dark

A Chase Overnight

kind of a sun-up, you know—but anybody could tell the Lucy as far as they could see her.

“Billie looks. ‘What the devil—the Lucy!’ he says. ‘And drivin’? My soul, look at her comin’! Make sail!’ he hollers. ‘Up with them tops’ls and balloon. Up with them!’ he hollers. ‘Somebody shift tacks for that fore tops’l there. We’ll jibe over and shoot through The Narrows. Bend on that stays’l, boys! Fly—fly—boys! the devil himself is after us now.’ We made sail. It was howlin’ from the no’west now, mind you, and we tackin’ up The Narrows.

“Whis-s-st! went the big balloon from the bolt ropes. Whis-s-st! went the fore tops’l—nothing left of that but a few rags and the bolt rope bangin’ round on the hoops. And we wasn’t a bit sorry when the tops’l went—shiftin’ tacks in a bloody no’wester, ain’t no joke up aloft, not the way the Parker was diving.”

“We saw them go, Steve. Oh, the Irishman hopped around and laughed. ‘We’ll get them yet! We can carry them!’ he was yellin’ and then the gale took an extra good grip on the Lucy’s fore tops’l that she’d carried all night long and pulled it out by the roots. Our two top-mast heads was springin’ together all this time like they was two whips, and the Irishman fit to be nailed up in a mackerel barrel, he was so mad.

A Chase Overnight

And then when he saw the Parker shoot into The Narrows—! The Narrows, of all the places in a no'wester—The Narrows in Boston Harbor with a big fisherman at that tide!"

"Well, Billie knew his business that time, Johnnie. It was tack, tack, tack, all the way through. Eight times we tacked before we were clear of it. You see, Billie figured he could take more chances than the Irishman here, he knew the harbor so well. 'Twas like the short cuts on Georges. But the devil was in the Irishman. Where we went he followed. We took some chances on the Parker, but imagine the Lucy pilin' on behind us and the skipper barely knowin' the regular channel—a Galway fisherman two years out."

"Well, we came to the last reach. 'I'm doubtful about this one, boys,' says Billie. 'But I don't care much if she does hit. If I don't crowd her by and we have to put back, the Irishman'll beat us in. And I'd just as soon have the Henry pile up anywhere along here, as have that happen this trip now. If she can't get by, why she can't, that's all; but we'll know we made a try for it. If the Lucy comes after us, she's takin' more chances yet.'

"But the fairies were with us, as the Irishman would say. We slid by and out, and then we

A Chase Overnight

humped it for the dock. We looked to see how you fellows made out, Johnnie.

“ ‘My soul, but he’s a game one,’ says Billie, watchin’ the Irishman. ‘Look at him bangin’ her right up where we went. I know he’s never been through The Narrows in his life. But it don’t matter—the devil and a steamer couldn’t get us now, if nothin’ parts.’

“ Billie began to take more short cuts. We went over places I’ll swear charts said we couldn’t. But we had to—there was the Irishman comin’ hand over fist. Wherever the Parker went, there was the Lucy along pretty soon. It was a race and it warn’t ended till both vessels were at the wharf.

“ Well, Billie just barely got it. When we made to shoot into the slip, there was the Irishman roundin’ to under our stern. He was standin’ aft by the wheel himself. When he comes abreast of us in the dock—our stern-line was barely made fast when his was hove upon the wharf—he shakes his fist at Billie.

“ ‘You win in all truth,’ Billie Simms, ‘but which vessel, think ye, is the best after all?’

“ ‘Oh,’ says Billie, laughin’, ‘this ain’t been no race. We just happened to be ready to run to market, as you remarked last night, and here we are. This old pung’ll do to carry home fish

A Chase Overnight

in a pinch, but if I had a good vessel, a real good vessel, like some I know in the fleet——'

"'A good vessel? Go and get one, Billie Simms. Build one of the Lucy's tonnage and I'll race you vessel agin vessel and the winner take them both. I'll show you the way, Billie Simms, from here to Georges and back again, or from here to hell—and back again, if we can get back.'

"'Oh, don't get so hot over it. I'm not sayin' the Lucy ain't a pretty good vessel. In summer breezes now, I ain't the least doubt she'd keep up with most any of the seinin' fleet—most any of 'em."

The big seine-heaver halted here in his narrative while he poured himself out a mug of coffee from the boiler on the stove and helped himself to a wedge of pie from the grub locker. But some of the crew rose up from lockers and bunks and queried impatiently, "And what did the Irishman say to that?"

"H-m-m——. What did he say? Ask Johnnie there—he was nearer than me to him. What did he say, Johnnie?"

"What did he say? Well, let it go, what he said. Some of you young men wouldn't be improved by hearin' what the Irishman said to Billie. I couldn't repeat it in cold blood. I'd

A Chase Overnight

have to have provocation, like the Irishman, y' see. But the two of them got over it. After they'd sold their fish, they got together in the Parker's cabin and Billie admits that so far as he knew the Lucy was the fastest vessel of her tonnage, take her on all-'round sailin', goin' out of Boston or Gloucester. Of course, that pleased the Irishman and he said that Billie always was an able seaman, and then—this was after they'd sold their fish and settled up—Billie let him make a copy of that private chart of the Georges. And while the Irishman was makin' it, Billie says: 'I never before let anybody make a copy of that chart—nobody but you. It'll be worth a lot to you, that chart,' says Billie.

"At that the Irishman looks up at Billie. 'Will it be worth twelve hundred dollars to me ever, d'ye think?'

"'H-m-m,' says Billie, 'I dunno; but it's been worth twelve hundred to me,' and then he laughs, and then the Irishman laughs. And afterward they went up on Atlantic Avenue and had a few drinks together. And I guess nobody ever worked any short cuts or beat the Irishman off the Georges since."

"No," said the big man, replacing his empty mug in the locker. "No, I'll bet they didn't. Boys, I could talk till this fo'c's'le was black

A Chase Overnight

about the Lucy and the Irishman. I was seine-heaver on her for two seasons. But me and Martin 'll have to be goin' along and hunt up the William Walker. In this light I guess we'll be able to make out her green sides and blue seine-boat. Good-by, Johnnie; good-by, everybody."

From the rigging of the Parker they picked out their vessel easily enough in the growing light. On the way they passed the famous Lucy, clear white at this time, with a gold stripe along her run. Steve stopped rowing to admire her.

"She cert'nly do look beau-ti-ful, the Lucy. She's a man for strength and a woman for good looks. A lady's yacht lyin' there, but a fisherman when there's somethin' doin'—able for the highest wind and the biggest sea that ever came out of the North Atlantic. Give me the Lucy in a gale, before all the three-stack liners that ever steamed out of New York. She'll shake you up—she'll jump—my soul but she'll jump! She's a little thing and needs to be lively to get out of the way, but, man, she'll bring you home at last, and that's the main thing with men that fish on the Banks. Watch her, Martin. Watch her an hour from now, when the sun's lookin' up over the Cape Cod shore and see the way she'll

A Chase Overnight

trip in and out among the fleet. When you see her round The Race and lay her thirty-odd foot spike bowsprit s'uth-east by east—about—then you'll surely know the seining fleet is standin' out to sea. For

' At three o'clock the cook he stirred
To bake the fine hot bread,
At four the skipper passed the word
That jumped us out of bed ;
In half an hour we'd made all sail
And broke the mud-hooks free,
At five o'clock the seining fleet
Was standing out to sea.' ''

And once again the big man roared it out :

And at fi-ive o'clock the sei-eining fleet
Was standing out to sea.

And with that he and Martin boarded the long-sought William Walker.



ON THE ECHO O' THE MORN





On the Echo o' the Morn

IN the harbor of Halifax, a hundred sail or so of the American seining fleet, Gloucestermen mostly, had come flying in before a "smoky sou'-wester." Supper finished and clothes-bags overhauled, the men were disposed to go ashore and explore the slopes of the city, where, it was hoped, some relaxation might be found while the gale should be blowing by outside.

Fishermen in port have many methods of dispelling care; but this tale concerns only the fancies of a choice dozen or so, who, on this particular night, chose to gather in a retired back-room on a side street not far removed from the big government dry-dock. Here, in snug privacy, behind close-drawn curtains, were recounted tales of other days and other ports, while, in a hearty, sociable, unhurried way, the flowing bowl went round.

These were master fishermen, skippers all, barring one—"Sylvie's passenger"—so rated because he was aboard the North Wind, of which Sylvester Warren was master, solely for pleasure. The

On the Echo o' the Morn

passenger's presence has but little to do with the story, and might not, indeed, have been mentioned at all, were it not that because of his extreme ignorance of certain fishing history, the storytellers of the evening at times went into detail, which, for themselves, they would have ignored.

It was really in deference to the passenger that Wesley Marrs, masking his narrative beneath explanations to his fellow-skipper, tried to set forth clearly, without going to too great a length, the peculiar ways of Billie Simms, whose temperament, it would seem, was known to the mariners present as though it were that of a brother. "It's your watch, Wesley," somebody had said, and Wesley's speech, after he had rekindled his pipe, flowed from him quite as the good ale gurgles from the fresh-tapped keg, with little spurts and gushes at times, but smoothly enough, and with a head of speed that told of the great store behind. The gathering knew that now they had got him on deck, Wesley was good to hold the wheel till daylight.

"You're right about the Portugee, Sylvie, he could crack on with the best of 'em"—the last tale had been of desperate sail-carrying. "You're right," went on Wesley, "he'd hang on 'bout's long as anybody, after he'd got educated up to it. To my way of thinking, the Portugee and the

On the Echo o' the Morn

Irishman and Eillie Simms and a few others'll get their happiness in the next world by being made skippers of vessels that can't be drew under, nor turned over, with spars that can't be busted, and sails that can't be stirred from the hoops. But Billie Simms was something more than just a driver. Billie had original ideas. Anything out the ord'nary run was what caught Billie. I mind one trip, he tried to see how much fish he could take home from Iceland. When he got ready to leave Rikievik, he had a load aboard, let me tell you. We didn't have to hoist the dories aboard at all, she was that deep—nary a tackle—just slid 'em over the rail. And he got very proud to get that halibut home—though we'd have bet he wouldn't, if there'd been anybody to bet with.

“Then, there was the time up Iceland way, too, when he thought he'd like to remember some Gloucester and Boston friends and he takes aboard one of those Iceland donkeys and three blue foxes. And he talked blue foxes to us till ten more of us got blue foxes—he had a way of describing things till you felt as'f there was nothing on earth so desirable as the things he was talking about. So we set sail from Rikievik this time with the donkey and thirteen of those blue Iceland foxes. The donkey was all right. We made a little stall for him on deck, just aft the main hatch, and all we

On the Echo o' the Morn

had to do was to feed him reg'lar and run him 'round the house every morning for exercise, with a painter to him, so if he rolled overboard we could haul him back. It was when the foxes got loose down the hold and set up such an awful barkin' that we couldn't sleep night or day, that our troubles began. Man, there was the job—to get them foxes in the hold. Chasin' polar bears on the ice, like Prentice was telling about awhile ago, ain't a mark to crawlin' after blue foxes in close quarters. They used to get between the top of the fish and the deck—'bout a foot and a half space—and we had to go and grab 'em. Bare hands? Of course. And when we'd begin to crowd 'em in a corner, their eyes'd shine, and—give me the polar bears with axes—if the axes are sharp. But that ain't what I had in mind to tell—give me a match, somebody—I can never keep a pipe agoin' when I get started talking. That's it, boy. I'll tell you 'bout a real lively trip with Billie Simms, where we did take a chance once."

Puff—puff—puff, went Wesley, smoking up, and then he laid his course afresh.

"Some of you, maybe, have got this story straight before, but some of you never got it first hand, may be, and, anyway, your passenger, Silvie, might like to hear exactly how it did happen.

"It was right on this very Nova Scotia coast

On the Echo o' the Morn

that we were seining the summer I'm talking about. It's Billie and the Echo o' the Morn, I'm talking about now. Billie used to be a dog after mackerel those days. He'd get 'em, if there was any around to get. This was the height of the time when so many American vessels were being seized by the English cutters for fishing inside the three-mile limit. You know what hard feelings there used to be between the Canadians and our fellows about fishing inside the shore line. American fishermen were being fined right and left, the Gover'ment at Washington was doing little but make talk, and at home, in Gloucester, everybody was boiling over about it.

"The Clayton brothers owned the Echo. They're out of business now, but some of you had dealings with 'em may be. One was strong on religion—had Bibles fore and aft on every one of his vessels—and the other was a hot sport, and on account of their difference of opinion, they used to split on the names of the vessels. That's how there came the Mutineer, then the Peace on Earth; then the Buccaneer, and the Three Shepherds. The Avenger and the Good Will to Men was launched the same week, and the Roisterer was chased off the stocks by the Echo o' the Morn. I mind well the launchin' of 'em both.

"But if they split on the names, they had

On the Echo o' the Morn

identical ideas 'bout skippers and crews. 'Read the Bible, men,' the old fellow would say, 'and abide by what you find therein.' We all found some pretty husky fighting men in that same Bible. The other brother's instructions to skippers was mostly, 'Bring home the fish.'

"Billie Simms had been offered a big percentage to take the Echo, and he shipped as fine and able a crew as ever I sailed with. The Echo was a handsome vessel, just off the stocks then, and I mind the curiosity of the Gover'ment sailing cutters down this way to try tacks with her. We went along for quite a while without getting more than our share of official calls from the cutters—they were slow in the stays, most of 'em. We used to keep track of the cutters, read the battles in the old man's Bibles reg'lar, and keep a sharp watch for fish aloft.

"As the Echo's hull was beginning to get known along the coast, they begins to crowd us pretty close. And one day they ketched us at what they said was inside the three-mile limit, where, of course, we had no business to be—if it was inside. I'm in doubt to this day whether we were inside the line or not, and I wouldn't hold back the truth of it now, but anyway they said we was. They always gave themselves the benefit of any doubts, these lads, when they were

On the Echo o' the Morn

dealing with American fishermen. There was two of 'em and one a steam cutter. It was no disgrace, p'raps, it being a flat calm and they mounting six guns apiece, but they had the laugh on us, the two cutters, and they walked us into Barnsley between them, the sailing lad to wind-'ard, where Billie said she'd never got by rights, and the steam fellow to looard. Into the harbor of Barnsley they walked us, with two hundred barrels of mackerel in our hold.

"They made the Echo fast to the dock, stripped the sails off her the first thing and put them in a sail-loft near by. Then they asked Billie to step up to the custom-house, where they asked him a lot of questions, which he didn't answer gen'rally, and when he did, they didn't put them down, Billie being a bit hot.

"The crew was all turned loose, of course. It was the vessels they wanted, they used to say. They'd set a fine, they said, and they'd have no trouble getting it, for if the owners didn't settle, they'd sell the Echo at public auction and get it that way. There was a Gloucester vessel caught two weeks ahead of us and fined \$3,000.

"Things looked bad for the Echo. Billie telegraphed to the owners how it happened. I was there when he wrote the message. 'Don't do anything till you hear further from me. May-

On the Echo o' the Morn

be we can settle to better advantage at this end,' was the winding up of it. 'Everybody in the place here will know what the message said inside of an hour,' Billie said, coming out of the telegraph office. And they did. They was laughing at us to our face and asking what soft kind of a settlement we expected to make with the Provincial Gover'ment.

"Next day Billie just laid around and waited in the morning. In the afternoon he took a couple of us and a small boat and we sailed out to where the two cutters were anchored, three or four cable-lengths off-shore. Billie had a talk with the Captain of the steam cutter, which was just opposite the sailing lad, p'raps seventy or eighty fathom between them, and they were taking up the harbor pretty well there, where the harbor made a kind of a neck. 'I tell you, Captain,' says Billie, looking across the way, 'a vessel that tried to sail out of here unbeknownst would get the devil, wouldn't she—having to go between you two?'

"'That's what she would,' said the Captain. My, but he laughed just to think of it.

"'It would be a good harbor, this one,' says Billie again, taking a look around, 'if 'twas only a mite wider up here.'

"'Well, it's wide enough below,' says the Cap-

On the Echo o' the Morn

tain. 'Deep water clear up to the shore. A blind man could pilot a vessel in and out here. He'd only have to keep her off the rocks.' Then he takes Billie down below and tells him all about the steam gear. 'Ready to move at half a minute's notice,' he says, when he comes up on deck again. 'You can't expect to get ahead of one of these machines with a sailing vessel,' he says—'not when her machinery is in working order.'

" 'I see,' says Billie, 'not when the steam gear's clear.'

"Then we gets into the small boat again and sails around to have a look at the harbor, which was just about as they said it was—deep water to the shore. The last thing Billie said when he stepped out of the small boat was: 'This time t'morrow morning the tide'll be just like it is now.' It was past three o'clock then, and the tide a fair ebb.

"That night about ten o'clock it was pretty quiet in Barnsley. We warn't very much surprised when Billie passed the word, in a quiet way, to slip the boarding-house we were staying at, and meet him outside. Billie soon told us what the game was, and we started right away. Four of us dropped down to the sail-loft, caught the watchman, gagged him, and tied him up.

On the Echo o' the Morn

He wouldn't tell us where the key was, and we broke in the door. We found the Echo's sails done up in packages, sealed up fine with red wax—all official. We rolled the watchman up in some old sail, so he wouldn't catch cold through the night, and then we hustled our packages down to the dock. We met a lad on the way who wanted to know what we was at. We tied him up, and took him along.

"We found Billie had everything ready at the dock, with the vessel's two custom-house watchmen and the dock watchman all tied up nice, and laid near the dock shed. We set our man in alongside, and they laid there like a row of Egyptian mummies—not a sound out of them, they being all gagged.

"We set to work. First, we spoilt them fine red wax seals with an axe, then started to bend on the sails. And let me tell you we druv things. Six of the crew stayed up to the street end of the dock to take care of any curious people that might happen to start to stroll down to take a look at the Echo. There was three of that kind, dark as it was. The three of them was captured, two of them policemen. Fitting on the sails we couldn't find any main tops'l in the bunch. We must have left it behind, but we couldn't stop to go back after it to the sail-loft. We were driving

On the Echo o' the Morn

you see, trying to get ready in time for the ebb tide, and out the harbor before daylight. We was all strung up, of course, thinking of what we had ahead of us. We were pretty near done with the sails, only the head sails left to fit on, when somebody said: 'Skipper, what about the steam cutter? Think we'll get by her?'

"Billie studied awhile. 'I've been thinking of her, and I guess we'd better tend to her now. Wesley, you, Hiram and Mike Feeney come with me. The rest of you'll have time to fit those jibs while we're gone.' We first gets out about twenty fathom of small chain, and a small anchor out of the hold, puts them into the dory—the dory and seine-boat was astern the Echo—and paddles over toward the steam cutter. Well, now you c'n believe we did some gentle rowin' toward that cutter—oars tied up in old rags, and the chain wrapped in blankets out of the bunks below, for the first three or four fathom.

"Billie himself goes overboard when we were under the stern of the cutter. We paid the chain out to him, handing it out, link by link, as if we were handing out men's lives. Billie was a dog in the water. He drops under and toggles the cutter's screws with the chain—takes two or three turns around each blade. Man, but he did a careful job. When he gets back in the dory

On the Echo o' the Morn

again—a water rat wouldn't ha' made so little noise—we paid out the chain—careful—oh, careful—and paddles away. When we got the chain's length out, we lowered the little anchor to the bottom, easy as could be, with a small line. Then we worked back to the Echo, where they had everything ready to leave.

“We warped her out of the dock—oh, first, Harvey goes up and covers up our row of prisoners under the shed, gives 'em a drink all 'round, and left 'em. They were found there in the morning, I s'pose.

“So we warped her clear of the dock—the sails had been hoisted afore we stirred at all, and you may be sure we had the masts and hoops pretty well slushed. We bore down on the two cutters. By their lights we knew they were laying broadside to each other, up and down stream just as they laid that afternoon. We knew we couldn't get outside either one, so Billie pointed the Echo up to go between. The wind was all right—not enough for fine work—but enough for the trick, and Billie callated the tide 'bout right—it was with us.

“We bore down. Of course, we was praying to get by without being seen. But it wasn't quite dark enough for that. Our sails must've showed, for we hadn't got between them at all,

On the Echo o' the Morn

when there came a hail from the steam cutter—to port she was—‘What vessel’s that?’ We stood on a little longer, and she hailed again, and the sailin’ cutter—to starboard—she hailed too, and they both hailed as if they meant business—‘What vessel’s that?’

“Billie standin’ by the wheel, sings out: ‘We’er the Echo o’ the Morn, seiner, of Gloucester. Report me, will you, to-morrow? The harbor master was off duty, and the Custom-house was closed when we left.’

“When he got that out we could hear the greatest racket on both cutters. They began to sing out—port and starboard both—‘Put about or we’ll fire,’ says one. ‘Go back or we’ll sink you,’ hollers the other.

“‘Fire and sink hell,’ says Billie. ‘You’ll only sink yourselves firin’ across at each other.’ And that was right, though I swear I don’t think another man aboard would’ve thought of that but Billie.

“That must’ve set them thinkin’, for they shut up for a few seconds. Then we heard the orders to make sail aboard one and the bells from the bridge on the other. ‘The sailin’ lad won’t bother us,’ says Billie. ‘She’s a square-ended old tub, and till they get that collar and necktie off the propeller I don’t think the steam boy’ll

On the Echo o' the Morn

do much either.' There certainly must've been some riotin' in the hold of that steam cutter. We heard the orders to slip the cable and the bells her Captain rung from the pilot-house. There was an awful flurry astern of her, and then such howls from above and below, from the bridge and the steam department. 'I callate,' says Billie, 'our little toggle chain and anchor's gone into action.' We were sliding by all the time.

"They let go a couple from their bow, but we was bowlin' along then, all of us lying flat on deck, all but Billie. He stood to the wheel, back to 'em, contemptuous like. 'They're firin' wide,' he says, and out the harbor he drives her.

"We were barely outside when a big steamer lit up like a barroom passed outside of us and swung in for Barnsley.

"'What do you make of that?' we asks Billie.

"'A cruiser from Halifax, sure's fate, come to take the Echo in charge. I guess we'd better take to more private courses before daylight comes along.'

"We put inside the islands along the coast soon's it got so's we could see at all. It was takin' chances going inside and driving her like we were, but we had to. If we stayed outside

On the Echo o' the Morn

the cruiser'd get us on her way back. We kept two men to the mast-head all that day, pickin' out channels and passages ahead. There was times when we didn't know whether she'd go another mile or another length ahead, but, as Billie said, 'We got to. Pile her up along here and there's a fighting chance for the owners to get insurance money, while if we go outside, it's all up, and the owners don't get so much as a dollar out of the hull or a single barrel of them mackerel in the hold. If they intended to fine us a couple of thousand dollars afore, they'll fine her all she's worth after this, not to speak of the partic'lar jail we'd fetch up in.' So we druv her along inside the coast islands.

"In the middle of the afternoon the lookouts to the mast-head reported smoke to the east'ard and coming down the coast. We were well on toward Halifax, then—along Egg Island way, twenty odd miles east of here—and Billie says: 'Might just as well lay her up here for a while.' So he picked out a cut behind a high island and we slid in there. Some of us went and made a landing in the seine-boat and climbed up the bluff of the island. It was our cruiser of the night before sure enough, and she was everlastin'ly poundin' along. We laid low among the broken rocks, and when she went by we could

On the Echo o' the Morn

make out her tops full of lookouts. By and by comes two cutters steaming along. One of them was our Barnsley cutter—the chain and anchor lad. They went on by, with more racket than so many fire-engines ashore, and Billie said they must've had their safety-valves strapped down the way they were steaming.

“‘There'll be a rondeevoo of Her Majesty's naval forces down Massachusetts Bay this time to-morrer,' says Billie, 'and all in honor of the Echo o' the Morn. But we'll beat 'em yet, we'll beat 'em yet. Can't you see the Echo, boys, runnin' the blockade? We'll run for Le Have Bank to-night, boys, and we'll beat 'em yet.'”

“When dark came, we put to the s'uth'ard, and all night long we drove her, everlastin'ly druv her till sun-up, when the log showed a hundred miles since sunset, and we were in among the haddockin' fleet off Le Have. We hunted around for one of the firm's vessels till we found the Buccaneer. Crump Taylor was skipper of her then. You all know Crump, of course, so I don't need to tell you the kind of a man he was. Crump hadn't been thinking of going home just then, but he takes all in and comes along when Billie tells him the story. The Quickstep, John McLeod, Soudan you know, was all filled up

On the Echo o' the Morn

and ready to leave. He said he'd like mighty well to wait and run home along with the two of us, when Billie told him how things stood. ' Might be of use, you can't tell, and we're most out of grub anyway,' says Soudan.

" Well, we first fits the Buccaneer's main tops'l onto the Echo, then swaps the Echo's seine-boat for the Buccaneer's dories—piles the nest of 'em in our waist, making us look like any other had-docker, and the three of us wings it out to the west'ard afore as sweet and fair a breeze as ever fanned a vessel off Le Have.

" That was long 'bout dusk. Night sailin' gen'rally is best in cases like that. The next afternoon we was in sight of Massachusetts Bay, Boston, I might say, when we notices the smoke of a steamer to s'uth'ard coming our way. The Buccaneer right away—that was Crump—he begins to drag behind, and points off no'therly a little—as if she had a mind for a harbor on the Maine coast. And he hauls his seine-boat—the Echo's seine-boat alongside, snug up, as if he wanted to hide it.

" Of course, they warn't letting any manoeuvre of that kind get by them on the cruiser, and they makes off after Crump. The Buccaneer and the Echo, mind, was as like as two number one mackerel. The onlv difference that day was the

On the Echo o' the Morn

Buccaneer carried no main tops'l, which, as I said, had been put onto the Echo.

"The cruiser comes along and lets go a blank at Crump. He keeps right on. Then in a little while comes another blank, which Crump didn't pay much attention to. Then comes a solid shot, close enough, it looked to us. Crump seemed a bit slow yet, and they sent another solid shot—plump through her fores'l, this one. I guess that was close enough for Crump, and he jams the Buccaneer into the wind and waits. Crump told us all about the rest of it afterward, for we, of course, was making long legs of it to west'ard.

"You'd laugh if you could hear Crump tell about how the cruiser's gig comes roundin' by his stern, where Crump'd hung a piece of old sail, as if he wanted to hide the name, by the way. They rows alongside. A petty officer—a petty officer, mind, as if that was good enough for a fisherman—he steps aboard by way of the seine-boat, which had her name—Echo o' the Morn—on her as plain's could be. This fellow smiles, reads the name, and steps over the Buccaneer's rail, looks up aloft, and says, for a starter: 'There's a tops'l up in a Barnsley sail-loft that would come mighty nigh to fitting that main top-m'st of yours.'

"He says that and smiles at Crump. You c'n

On the Echo o' the Morn

imagine Crump leanin' agin the main riggin' in that easy way of his, and looking up to the mast-head, and sayin'—'It do look kind of bare, don't it?'

"'Yes,' says the navy boy, 'and I s'pose you wish to know what we want?'

"'I can't say's I do,' says Crump.

"'P'raps you would like to hear?'

"'Oh, I dunno's I'll have any melancholy night-watches if I don't hear,' says Crump, 'but if it'll ease *you* any, why, drive her.'

"Well, the cruiser lad goes on with a long mess of stuff about the American schooner, the Echo o' the Morn, seized by Her Majesty's cutters—the Calenso and the Seal—for violation of the International Fishing Laws Treaty, and stolen from the custody of the Dominion Government's officers on the night of August the twenty-seventh, at Barnsley, Nova Scotia, and, further, there was charges of several assaults and batteries, not only to official persons, but to private persons, and so on. It took him nigh fifteen minutes to tell it all.

"'God save the Queen,' says Crump, and spits over the rail—you know Crump's way—that's all official, I s'pose.'

"'Yes, sir—and be careful.'" The navy lad was pretty hot.

On the Echo o' the Morn

" 'Yes?' says Crump.

" 'Yes,' fires back the navy lad.

" 'Well, you said it pretty nice, but what's it got to do with me?'

" 'What's it got—do you deny that you are the American fishing schooner, the Echo o' the Morn?'

" 'We're cert'nly a fisherman,' answers Crump, 'there's our gurry kids on deck under your nose, and a hundred thousand of fresh fish in the hold, if you want more proof, and we're cert'nly American—there's our flag to the peak for that—but it's most interestin' news to me that we're the Echo o' the Morn, though I'll admit we do look something like her, the two of them havin' been built off the same moulds and rigged to the same plans.'

" The Englishman only grins and looks over the side and points to the name on the seine-boat.

" 'Ho, ho,' laughs Crump, as if he'd just caught on, 'ho, ho.' The Englishman smiles and Crump goes on. 'You're the boys for cuteness, you navy lads. But, gen'rally, down our way, when we want to get at a vessel's name, we look at what it says astern of her or on the trail-board under her bow for'ard;' and, mind you, the canvas was hanging over the stern and the

On the Echo o' the Morn

letters for'ard so chafed that you couldn't have read 'em twenty feet away.

"The Englishman smiles his everlastin' smile and sings out to his boat's crew to drop astern and look at the name. 'We have to be certain,' he says.

"One of the men in the boat lifts the canvas and peeks underneath.

"'What name?' sings out the petty officer, all ready to smile at Crump.

"'Buccaneer, of Gloucester.'

"'What?' he screeches. He runs aft, pulls the canvas clear, leans way over and looks for himself. Then he runs for'ard, bends over the knight-heads, and spells it out there. Back he comes, not quite so sry. 'I've heard of such things as painting over names. Don't carry this thing too far,' he bellows at Crump.

"'Yes,' says Crump, 'it do look like fresh paint, don't it?'

"'That will do,' roars the Englishman. 'Where are your papers?'

"Crump makes a great bluff to study some more. Fin'lly he says, turning to the crew: 'Boys, let you all bear witness to this thing, for a claim for damages'll come out of it sure's I'm skipper of this vessel and my name's Henry Taylor. This man—bear witness to all I say,

On the Echo o' the Morn

boys—this man is acting outside of his rights now, but it must never be said that Gloucester fishermen don't abide by the law.' And he goes on for ten minutes or so in a patriotic way till the Englishman wouldn't stand for any more of it. After that Crump uses up about twenty minutes finding his papers below. Of course the papers were all right. When the Englishman, after looking them all over, had handed them back, and as they were going up on deck again, Crump says, 'Of course I might've shifted those papers, too, or made 'em myself or something like that. If you like you can step down to the fo'c's'le and see whether all the tin pans and cook's dishes is properly marked, or——'

" 'You could have exchanged outfits just the same. You could have met this vessel—' My, but he was hoppin' 'round, accordin' to Crump, and you oughter heard Crump tell it.

" 'Yes,' goes on Crump, 'maybe, and swapped suits of sails, too. In the leach of that fores'l that's handy to you there maybe you c'n make out where the word *Buccaneer* is stencilled on—not that I ain't saying it wouldn't be possible to swap sails, too—I've heard of such things as fitting on sails in a hurry. I've——'

" 'That will do. Where'd you get that seine-boat?'

On the Echo o' the Morn

" 'And of course,' goes on Crump, paying no attention, 'the Echo o' the Morn, being a mackerel catcher, would be likely to have gurry kids all over her deck, wouldn't she? and her hold full of fresh fish, too—lift the main hatch there, boys, and show the gentleman.'

" 'Where did you get that seine-boat?' yelled the navy boy.

" 'On La Have,' yells back Crump. 'Blowed aboard on La Have at the same time we lost our dories and our tops'l. An awful blow. In all my experience——'

" 'A blow on La Have? See here, there's been no blow off that way reported in Halifax lately.'

" 'Maybe not—maybe—but there's lots of things happens on La Have that ain't reported in Halifax.'

" The Englishman was fair boiling now, but at the same time he was beginning to come out of his dream. All of a sudden, Crump says, he puts his glasses onto the Echo and the Quickstep and then all at once he wakes up, jumps into the gig, and sings out, 'Pull away, pull.'

" 'Good-by,' calls out Crump after him in his sociable way, 'and next time you happen to be in Barnsley you might send me that tops'l you think would fit us so well. Mark it "Henry C.

On the Echo o' the Morn

Taylor, Master Schooner Buccaneer, Gloucester, Massachusetts, U.S.A.," and I'll be sure to get it. 'Good-by,' hollers Crump again, 'and I'll pay the freight,' but he says he didn't get any answer.

"Well, the cruiser was pretty near hull down to us when she come 'round on her heel again, thanks to Crump, and it was getting pretty late in the afternoon. We could see by the way smoke was coming out of her that they were driving her. But the wind holding, we knew she couldn't get us short of two hours, and that gave us time to do something, with the night coming on.

"The last thing we did on the Echo for the cruiser's partic'lar benefit was to rig up our side-lights on the blades of two long seiner's oars and lash 'em straight up in a dory. That raised them up about as high as side-lights ought to be, y' see. Then Billie tells us what he was going to do. The dory was lowered over the side and I dropped into her. He heaves a splitting knife after me, and says, 'You'll need that.' There was an everlastin' long painter—a forty-fathom line—coiled in her bow. Billie hails Soudan and tells him what to do. Soudan throws the Quickstep up and waits for us. The Echo hauls across the Quickstep's bow and Billie casts me off as the Echo shoots by. I hove the long painter to the Quickstep and they takes it and drops me astern. The

On the Echo o' the Morn

Echo goes winging off with nary a light up at all, and me in the dory, and the dory like any vessel with her lights up proper being towed along to beat the devil, in the wake of the Quickstep, and she hauling away for Minot's Light as if she was crazy to get to Boston.

"When the cruiser overhauled us—I could hear her screws long before she got to us—she ranges up to starboard and sings out for us to heave to. 'Both of you,' hollers the voice. I couldn't see her clear, except for her lights, but I could hear her plain enough, for she lets go a blank at the same time that makes me feel like curling up in the dory. 'Blessed Lord,' thinks I, 'if ever they send one of those six-inch fellows aboard of this dory, where'll I be?' I was praying that Soudan wouldn't try any of Crump's tricks and be too slow to come to.

"But Soudan throws her up pretty prompt and waits. Then I heard the cruiser's falls makin' ready to lower away a boat and it was my move. I outs with my splitting knife and cuts down the red light to get that out the way. That being to port, of course they couldn't see it, and I puts it out and heaves it overboard. Then I cuts away the starboard oar below, slashes the lashin's from the light—the green light, toward them—opens the slide, blows out the light and

On the Echo o' the Morn

heaves that over—all this jumpin', mind you. Then I jumps over the bow, cuts the painter free behind me, and hits out for the Quickstep. Let me tell you I was drivin'.

"I hadn't got fair started, hauling myself along by the painter and under water most of the time, when I hears :

" 'Aboard the le'ward schooner, there! Put up your side-lights again, or we'll fire.'

"Of course I didn't say anything to that, but keeps on.

"They hollers again, gets no answer, and then—boom! Man, it nigh lifted me out of the water! And boom!—another one. 'Blessed Lord,' thinks I, 'if one of them goes astray and gets me in the small of the back—' But all the time I was putting in big strokes for the Quickstep, my hair fair curlin' up with thinking of one of those shells jibing to wind'ard and ketching me.

"Anyway, I got aboard. It was Soudan helped me over the stern of the Quickstep.

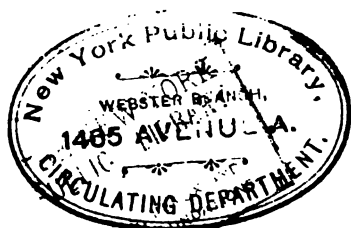
" 'Are you all right?' he says.

" 'All right,' says I, 'but I guess the dory's shook up some.'

" 'Yes,' he says. 'They've spoiled her carryin' capacity by this time, I guess. There's number eight—they'll be giving her a broadside soon.' Boom!—Boom!—Boom!—they went. 'Bout



"I cuts away the starboard oar below."



ASTOR
TILDEN FOUNDATION

On the Echo o' the Morn

the time they must have figured out they'd blown the Echo out the water, they stopped. Then we could hear their boats rowin' our way and soon we made out one of them heading for us. There was a warrant officer in charge of the one coming to board us—the same lad that boarded the Buccaneer. We found out when we swapped stories with Crump afterward.

“‘I say,’ this lad sings out, ‘she didn’t get away that time, did she?’ And he steps over the rail.

“‘No,’ says Soudan, like a man that’d lost a young wife. ‘I guess you fixed her that time.’

“Pretty soon the second boat comes alongside. This one had a sure-enough officer, a lootenant, in charge. He was sorter worked up. ‘Captain,’ he says to Soudan, ‘I’m sorry for those men. Here’s all we found, an oar and some pieces of a dory, apparently, and some lines with hooks in a half-barrel—trawls, you call them?’

“‘A tub of trawls, I guess,’ says Soudan. ‘Fetch a torch, boys.’ He looks and goes on: ‘Yes, that’s one of their tubs of trawls, sure enough.’

“‘We could find nothing else. Isn’t it queer?’ says the officer.

“‘The tides hereaway are queer,’ says Soudan,

On the Echo o' the Morn

without so much as a wink. 'We are now over a most peculiar place, on one edge of Middle Bank, in Massachusetts Bay, and there's queerer spots here than was ever in the Bay of Fundy or on the Grand Banks.'

" 'Really?' says the officer.

" 'Yes,' says Soudan, 'for queer tides and eddies this is the spot. There's been some mysterious disappearances traced to here. But, letting that go, this is a bad business, Lootenant, blowing up the Echo.'

" 'Yes, it certainly is bad—horrible. But they should not have put the lights out as they did. What were they thinking of—she directly under our guns!'

" 'Yes,' says Soudan, 'Billie oughter had more respect for a real man-o'-war. Maybe he thought you was only a cutter in the dark?'

" 'Thought? Didn't he see us just before dark, when we boarded the other fellow, the Buccaneer?'

" 'Yes,' says Soudan, 'he did. He must have. I saw you and he must have. But it's liable to lead to big things, to international complications—in-ter-nation-al compli-ca-tions'—he rolls it out like an election orator—'it may terminate in bloody war,' says Soudan.

On the Echo o' the Morn

“ ‘ War ? ’ says the officer, studying, ‘ war ? ’ ”

“ ‘ Or eye-dem-ity, ’ says Soudan. You oughter seen Soudan swell out.

“ ‘ Possibly—very likely—yes, yes, most likely, ’ says the officer. Then he takes down Soudan’s full name, name of vessel, name of vessel’s owner, gets all the figures he can about the Echo—Soudan raising the builder’s price a few thousand—gets Billie’s name, and names of crew and all that. Then he puts off, goes back to the cruiser, the petty officer with him, and they steams off—her course about east by south, which would clear Cape Sable and put her on her way to Halifax, where I s’pose she got in next night with her bearings all hot and a great tale to tell.

“ Next morning, when we came into Gloucester in the Quickstep, there was the Echo lying in the stream and her colors all set, the sassiest-looking little vessel in the whole North Atlantic. The city was just getting warmed up to the thing when we arrived. The newspapers had been full of the seizure down East. England, they said, was trying to crowd us on the fishery laws and the United States was a little slow picking it up, and so the country was boiling over when they heard about the Echo’s escape. It was speeches, mass meetings, and editorials—all hot—and lots

On the Echo o' the Morn

of people got a chance to blow off steam. When the Echo was reported escaped, there warn't many ever really thought she'd get by the cutters and the cruiser that was known to be after her. Then there was the three days or so when they didn't know where she was. So all Gloucester came running down to the docks when the word was passed that she was home. 'The Echo's in—the Echo's in,' was ringing all over Gloucester like a fire alarm. The Quickstep and Buccaneer, coming in four or five hours afterward, had cannons fired for 'em as they sailed up the harbor, but that was only the overflow—it was the Echo's crew that got it. People came from everywhere to look at the Echo and shake hands with Billie and us. It was Captain William Simms and the darin' crew of the Echo o' the Morn. Yes, sir. They wrote songs about it—half a dozen or more—and City Hall was lit up and bonfires in the streets—in the middle of Main Street, man. And there was parades with red and blue and green lights and all kinds of queer fireworks. One showed the Echo running through a fleet of men-o'-war, every blessed one of 'em blazing broadsides at her and she never losing a spar. For a few days lots of people didn't do a tap of work—just stood on the curb-stones and talked about the Echo. Whenever one of us showed up

On the Echo o' the Morn

there'd be a rush and we'd have to tell how it happened all over again. We was given the freedom of the city, which meant, as Hiram Whitaker said, that you could go into any bar-room in Gloucester and order all the drinks you wanted and as many times as you wanted and not be allowed to pay for 'em. Hiram cert'nly got drunk that week. There was a purse made up and we got a hundred and fifty dollars apiece out of that, besides a good share from the two hundred barrels in her hold, which fetched patriotic prices, everybody wantin' to get hold of some of the Echo's mackerel. It beat reg'lar fishin' all out. Billie got a big solid silver punch-bowl, and there was smaller bowls for the rest of us, and they gave me a monstrous big meersh'm pipe, gold mounted, with my name in gold letters on the case. That was for standing by the lights in the dory, they said. And—smoke it?—h-m-m—no more than I'm smoking this one now—I wonder how long it's been out. I'm bad as Billie Simms himself. He never could keep a pipe going when he got started talking. When he got goin', he'd forgot who made him—man, the imagination he had! But if somebody'll give me another match—and is there anything at all left in that bowl there, Sylvie?"

"Oh, there's a good round left yet, Wesley."

On the Echo o' the Morn

"Enough to sluice out the scuppers with, eh?"

"Just about. And the passenger here wants to know if you'll sing one of the Echo's songs—the one they sang at the big banquet. You got time. Just a second now, Wesley, boy. There!—there's one swashing over the rail for you. Here you go, Prentice—here's for you, John Harkins, and pass that to the passenger. All you others reach over and get your own, and stand by while Wesley sings. Hold up a second yet—draw the curtains there and let in a little light—the sun's most up. Might's well open up the windows, hadn't we, and let some of this smoke blow away?—it's as thick as any banker's fo'c's'le on the run home. Smells fine and sweet, that, don't it? It's the last of the sou'wester—there'll be mackerel schoolin' after this little blow, fellows. Maybe a full hold for some of us to-day, if cutters don't get too fresh. I swear, but some day we ought to turn, three or four crews of us, and gaff one of them, hah?—and tear 'round down the coast and chase everything that ain't American into harbor when mackerel is schooling,—hah, Wesley?"

"Ho, but Billie Simms'd be the boy for that, Sylvie. Well, here's a shoot and devil take the cutters—no, no, they have that for their work, I

On the Echo o' the Morn

s'pose. Here's to fish a plenty for all of you, and to the Echo o' the Morn."

"Drive her, Wesley, drive her," voiced Sylvie for the bunch, "and stand by all hands while Wesley sings."

So Wesley sang. His attitude was characteristic—left hand deep in his waistband pocket and right hand gripping his glass; one shoulder braced to wind'ard and feet well apart, to meet the heave of the deck, evidently; eyes bent on the lookouts at the forem'st-head and a voice pitched to reach that same forem'st-head with certainty, against a fresh and rising head breeze—standing so, as if he were to the wheel, Wesley sang the ballad of the Echo o' the Morn. Twelve or fourteen good stanzas there were, the plain tale of the Echo all over, done into rhyme by a fo'c's'le poet, who must have held in high esteem the vessel and her crew and those very able auxiliaries, "Crump" Taylor and "Soudan" McLeod:

From the loft we took her sails, and bent 'em in the night,
And sailed her out the harbor, with cutters left and right.

.

Sou'west by su'the we drove her till the sea was fair aroar,
And we never touched a halyard as to La Have we bore.

.

On the Echo o' the Morn

Lights out and southern courses, let her head come round,
Devil take the British forces, here's the Echo homeward bound.

Crump Taylor towed her seine-boat, Soudan towed her lights,
And the Echo slipped the cruiser in the darkness of the night.

So Wesley sailed the Echo again, omitting not
a single course of the lively vessel nor a single
order of the audacious Billie, sailed her from the
dock at Barnsley, out the harbor, down the coast,
off to La Have Bank, westerly again, across the
Bay of Fundy and into Massachusetts Bay, till at
length he sailed her up the harbor of Gloucester
and rounded her to off the owner's dock, very
proudly, with colors gayly flying, to main peak
and both trucks. Wesley's fellow-skippers entered
heartily into the chorus. "Drive her, boys,
drive her—give her a full now and drive her,"
they said. And under Wesley's pilotage they
drove her:

Here's to the keel of her, here's to the sails of her,
The mast and the hemp and the deck and the rails of her;
Here's to the length, and the depth, and the beam of her,
To every blessed plank and bolt and every blessed seam of her.
Here's to the everlastin' glory of the Echo o' the Morn.

And—

May she live to sail away, to the boom of Judgment-day,
When we hope to see her sailin' to the toot of Gabr'el's horn.

With feet well braced and bodies swaying, the

On the Echo o' the Morn

skippers roared the toast after a fashion that must have carried every syllable of every line to every awakening sleeper in the block.

They themselves liked the effect of it so well that they sang it over again, and it was to the long roll of one particularly sluggish line,

To every blessed plank and bolt and every blessed seam of her,

that they heaved themselves out and down the side street. From here, with the rhythmic tramp of mariners ashore, they wore into the main street, bore s'utherly, chanting all the while, though soberly and with less exuberation now, for the city was coming awake and beginning to stare. And by and by they jibed over to their dock, where boisterous crews in waiting were trolling farewell ditties of their own.

They piled into their seine-boats, and with long oars and a monstrous big one steering they all drove out into the harbor. They raced past the big dry dock, past the revenue cutters, their hereditary enemies, now with steam up, past the Admiral's great battle-ship and her attendant cruisers—the best part of the British North Atlantic squadron—past all these and other miscellaneous craft, until, with the booming of the morning gun from the Citadel, they were in among their own again.



FROM REYKJAVIK TO
GLOUCESTER

'Twas sou' sou'-west,
Then west sou'-west.
From Rik-ie-vik to Gloucester;
'Twas strainin' sails
And buried rails
Aboard the Lucy Foster.

Her planks did creak
From post to peak,
Her topm'sts bent like willow;
"I'll bust her spars,"
Says Wealey Marrs,
"But I'll beat the Bounding Billow."
—*Gloucester Fishermen's Song.*

From Reykjavik to Gloucester

ELEVATED above the head of a deep wharf-slip, low flanked by a ship-chandler's shop to one side and a sail-maker's loft to another, commanding a fine view of the docks and harbor beneath, and of the bay beyond, perched up where nothing coming or going past Eastern Point will fail to be noticed—this is the lookout tower of the Great Eastern Fish Company of the port of Gloucester, which, be it known, is the first fish mart of our country. In the official bulletins of the company this place is known as the "Observatory," but in the every-day speech of the fishermen of Gloucester it is better and more fittingly described as the "Crow's Nest."

To attain this aerie it is needful to go round and round long flights of steps, that creak to your weight and sway to the wind as you climb. After you get there, you find a room of three flat walls and a rounded front, of which the rear, or west side, is blocked off by the staircase whereby you

From Reykjavik to Gloucester

came. Coast charts, bank soundings, world maps, and magazine illustrations of a nautical and sporting nature are tacked to the wall on your left. On the wall at your right—the southerly—are several pairs of marine glasses, a long telescope, and an aneroid barometer, hung from nails driven here and there, wherever space is to be found among the relief models of what all men know to be fast-sailing fishermen. A fresh varnished but much dented spar, an old topmast most likely, butts through the centre of the ceiling and is braced to the floor.

The east side is all of glass. This is the side that opens on to a little quarter-deck balcony, and looks out to sea. This balcony may be entirely closed in by an arrangement of shutters that work over and down like companion hatches, although you find out later that you have to climb to the upper deck by way of an outside rope ladder to make them work. In the centre of one of the hatches, when you come to look, is a brass-bound port-hole, plainly intended for stormy weather. A realistic bit of railing, really the taffrail of a fisherman wrecked off Thatcher's, is there to guard the unwary—once over the low rail and you are down to the waters of the dock. There is a row of scuppers along the balcony's deck, and under the rail are a couple of cleats, to

The "Crow's Nest."



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ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS.

From Reykjavik to Gloucester

which are made fast the halyards that run to the flag at the masthead.

Only one chair is in this place, after the fashion of up-to-date fishermen, which always carry a hinged chair in the cabin for the skipper's use. This chair is for the lookout on duty. All others must sit on the lockers against the walls, or squat on the stair-landing at the rear, or content themselves with leaning over the stern of the quarter-deck. All this goes to make up the famous "Crow's Nest," of that abode of modern vikings, the fishing port of Gloucester.

It is the business of the lookout on duty to take his station in front of the window and watch for incoming vessels. If it is a fine day, like this one, he will hoist the window-sashes back to the pulleys, push forward his chair, and rest his feet on the rail. When he sights an inbound fisherman, he will identify her at the earliest possible moment, and make immediate report of same to the office.

Two men are paid for this work, each standing watch in his turn. Being keen of eye and acquainted with the minutest peculiarities of every schooner in the fleet, these men can name vessels at incredible distances. In some cases, where neither knowledge nor eyesight could possibly avail, they make marvellous guesses—for which

From Reykjavik to Gloucester

they do not attempt to account. It may be a sixth sense that enables them to pick out and identify a vessel while she is yet but a blur in the haze to most of us.

Their business, as has been said, is to make early report of incoming vessels. They do that very well, and it is for that they are paid ; but their pleasure and their most arduous occupation lies in the absorbing art of conversation. In the skilful development of this faculty they are aided by a volunteer staff of regular callers, who much prefer to put in time at this congenial observatory than to attend to any fatiguing business that might arise to meet them were they to stroll incautiously along the wharves.

What subject might suggest itself to the council of Crow's Nest at any particular lull, no prophet could say with certainty ; but on a day like this, a beautiful summer morning, with a gentle easterly sighing in over the rail, and the docks and the harbor below alive with the loading and outfitting of many seiners, it could not very well get far away from the doings of the mackerel fleet.

Fourteen of the seining fleet were in, and this favorable easterly would be sure to bring in more. It had been an extraordinary season for the seiners. There was plenty of mackerel to be had, and they were bringing great prices. Stocks

From Reykjavik to Gloucester

of three and four thousand dollars were getting common for vessels, and men no longer boasted of sharing anything under a hundred dollars for a short trip. It promised to be an unprecedented season altogether, and the watchers in the tower, when next they resumed the conversation, were disposed to rejoice.

"It's a good thing for Gloucester, it's a fine thing for the men," observed the lookout in the chair. "Won't be so many have to go to Georges or the big banks this winter to find grub and rent for the wife and children. Here's a lad coming in now—wait, till I make sure with the glass—yes, the Lucy Foster. Bill, report the Lucy Foster, Captain Marrs, to the office, will you? Ten days she's been gone. This lad'll be glad enough for a good mackerel season, for he does hate haddockin' in winter. He went last winter, and he says he's had enough of that kind of fishin'."

"Shouldn't think he'd have to—the money he's made, Petie."

"No, he oughtn't to, but Wesley's been a spender. But this spring, before he went on the southern mackerel cruise, he gave it out that he was going to save. I don't know myself what's drivin' him—he's close-mouthed enough for all he's so reckless some ways. But I wouldn't be

From Reykjavik to Gloucester

surprised if he was stowin' away something against getting married this fall. He's certainly piling up a stock and hustlin' as if he intended to have a little salvage to draw on when he made up his mind to stop ashore a winter and start housekeeping. And if he does get married, I s'pose that ends the Lucy for carryin' the broom. I don't expect we'll hear of any more piling on sail to see how much she really can stand up under, or layin' her over to see how far she'll go without capsizing."

"Why?" put in one of those slow-witted ones, who must always have things explained in detail.

"Why? why?" snorted the man in the chair. "Did y'ever see any of the drivers keep it up long after gettin' married? Don't it tame the wildest of 'em when they get to thinkin' that p'raps the wife and children's waitin' for them at the end of the trip?"

"Well, I dunno. I don't see as Archie Nichols slacked any since he got married."

"Archie Nichols? Good Lord! does he count? Married a no-use woman that's druv him to drink and worse things than he ever took up with before. Leave Archie out. And look at the others. There's Tommy Bolton now. What do his crew tell you about him now?"

From Reykjavik to Gloucester

Do you hear of him pullin' the spars out of his vessel since he settled down to a home of his own? Can't you see him any afternoon now between trips walking down Main Street abreast of his little woman and the latest fat baby on his arm? Ever hear of Billie Simms in this year o' grace havin' to go on the railway 'bout every other trip or so to have the Henry Clay Parker overhauled for strained seams for'ard? I guess not. Nor Wesley Marrs, nowadays; and he's only engaged, at the worst—tryin' to see what he can do with the Lucy without getting her hove down. I guess not."

"I say, Peter," inserted a subtle one, who measured exactly the temper of the sage in the chair, and was eager to forward the psychological moment, "was Wesley Marrs such a devil for driving, after all?"

"Devil? He was all the devils, when it came to carryin' sail. Now I was with him three years. My last trip, when I fell from the masthead in among the gurry kids and broke my knee-cap, I was with Wesley Marrs in the Lucy Foster. I'm telling you this man'd spread a whole mains'l to a gale as quick as your wife or mine'd hang out a bed-sheet to the sun. When a sail went into the air—busted—Wesley used to follow it with his eyes and then say, surprised-like: 'Don't

From Reykjavik to Gloucester

it beat hell—the rotten canvas they puts on vessels these days? ’ ’ ”

“ You must have been with him, Peter, when that record run was made from Iceland—when the Lucy and the English yacht had their big race.”

“ Was I? Twenty-eight hundred miles, they call it, from Rikievik to Gloucester, and the Lucy came down in nine days and ten hours. That’s going, people, for any vessel; but this one that time had her hold full of fletched halibut.”

“ What was it brought him along so fast? ”

“ Well—I guess wind had as much to do with it as anything. Just plain wind, out of the bosom of the North Atlantic, and p’raps a little, just a little, of Wesley Marrs’ drivin’ her.”

“ Who beat? ” interjected a voice that should never have been allowed to disturb the silence of this generally well-posted company.

The man in the chair looked around with much curiosity to discover the inquirer. It was a young fellow, plainly not long in Gloucester, one of those lads who so frequently come there to try fishing—and quite often make good fishermen—but who are sometimes a great trial to their friends while acquiring the rudiments.

“ Who beat? ” echoed Peter in scorn. “ And

From Reykjavik to Gloucester

when'd you get in and *where'd* you get your fish?"

"I say, Peter," put in the subtle questioner on whom devolved the duty of holding the story to its course, "were you there when the match was made?"

"Was I? Warn't the skipper and me and Joe Lane gittin' down to a little table over a glass—you don't stand up to a bar there generally—and the skipper was pretty well pleased. You see he'd only bought out the Wild Irishman's half of the Lucy late that spring and this was his first trip. He paid \$5,000 cash for the Irishman's half—our firm owned the other half same as now. And the last thing the Irishman said when he signed the papers and took the money was: 'Now, Wesley, b'y, you're gettin' a great vessel—fourteen thousand to build, but we'll say nothing of that. You're gettin' a vessel that nothing of her tonnage anywhere can sail away from. While I owned her she was the jewel of the fleet. Don't let anything cross her bow, Wesley, b'y.' The Irishman went to the Pacific Coast that time to look up seals Behring Sea way.

"Well, Wesley was telling us about that very talk with the Irishman and saying how the Lucy could sail and everything like that. You know how he'd be likely to carry on talkin' 'bout his

From Reykjavik to Gloucester

vessel. This swell-dressed Englishman was takin' it all in. We didn't know who he was, though we suspicioned he was English every time we looked at him. At last he mixes in. He says :

“ ‘Excuse me, but I gather you are fishermen up here for halibut?’

“ ‘You're right,’ says Wesley.

“ ‘From the States?’

“ ‘From America? Yes—from Gloucester,’ says Wesley.

“ ‘Ah, from Gloucester. Fine, able fishermen from there, I hear,’—he kind of drawed his words out—‘hardy, courageous, fine, able seamen——’

“ ‘And fine able vessels,’ says Wesley, warmin' up right away. We guessed easy enough what was in Wesley's mind. Somebody or other'd been writing stories 'bout Gloucester fishermen 'bout that time and putting them in the old style pinkies and square-ended tubs that was the fashion when some of your fathers and mine went to sea. I never yet went among strangers in any of the new vessels that they didn't seem to be surprised at the build of our vessels, and, of course, the Lucy Foster and a few others of that model struck 'em dumb. Anyway, to get along with the story, the Englishman was surprised to hear that the Lucy was a fisherman—he'd an eye for fine vessels, y'see—and had noticed her in the harbor.

From Reykjavik to Gloucester

But he didn't know much about our kind of people and Wesley kind of explained some things to him.

"Then the Englishman told his story. He owned the big schooner yacht, the all-white fellow with the varnished top-rails and yellow stripe along the run. We'd had an eye on her, by the way, and a handsome craft she was. That was his cruiser. He'd come in the day before from some queer place on the coast of Norway and he didn't see anything in Rikievik to hold him. He was bound for America next by way of Boston, Newport, New York, Baltimore, and so on down, so's to be among the West Indies for the winter.

"Well, he was a pretty hot sport, this one, and you all know the kind of a boy Wesley used to be when anybody spoke against his Lucy. They had an argument, back to the days of the old America and all that. Finally, they 'greed to race to Gloucester. The Englishman said he'd just as leave run into Gloucester so long as it was so handy to Boston.

"This Englishman was all right. He says about the money: 'Your word is sufficient for me, Captain. Men that look like you will pay up. If you lose, you pay over a thousand dollars. If I lose, I pay over to you a thousand,

From Reykjavik to Gloucester

to settle as soon as both boats get into Gloucester. And in the matter of time allowance—the Bounding Billow, you must have noticed, is half as big again as you are. She isn't loaded down like you, and I can afford to give it. She has never been beaten at ocean racing, by the way, and I am willing to give you time allowance for our larger measurement.'

“‘To hell with time allowance,’ says Wesley. ‘When fishermen race, they all start together. And first vessel home wins. You’re a little longer and more beam and draught—let it go. And’s for being loaded down—the Lucy could stow away half as many more halibut, and I wish she had it, the way halibut’s been this summer. Don’t worry about the Lucy. Those couple of hundred thousand of fletched halibut down below ’ll just give her a grip on things—sort o’ stiffen her up and keep her from layin’ over too much when it comes to blow—and it’s coming to blow or I don’t know. There’ll be wind stirrin’ before you or me see Eastern Point, and the vessel that’ll carry the sail’ll be the lad for the trip. I tell you, man, with all of these September gales coming our way, you won’t think you’re yachting off Cowes. I hope your gear’s been overhauled lately,’ says Wesley, and with that they left to get things ready.

From Reykjavik to Gloucester

"There was a gentle gale stirrin' from the no'th'ard when we sailed out of Rikievik next day, Friday. Wesley liked the look o' things pretty well. We put out behind the Englishman, him under two-reefed mains'l and the Lucy under a single reef—two jibs and whole fores'l, both of us. That was along 'bout dark. Wesley didn't make any attempt to push by the yacht—just laid to wind'ard of her. He did love to get to wind'ard of a vessel—lay off her quarter and watch her. And for most of the rest of that night, we stayed there so.

"When the sun ought to have been pretty near to showin' up again, Wesley says: 'Boys, I can't see but what the Lucy's holdin' her own, and I guess we'll wear off to the east'ard just a little. We might's well get out of sight of this fellow quick's we can now. I've a notion, too, this breeze'll be coming from that quarter before a great while, and there's nothing the Lucy likes quite so well as to take it just a tri-i-fle slanting when it blows.'

"I don't know whether the Bounding Billow people saw us get away or not—p'r'aps they didn't care. Anyway, they didn't come after us. We sunk their port light down afore daylight, and by good sun-up there wasn't a sail of her in sight.

From Reykjavik to Gloucester

“ Well, it didn’t come to blow same’s Wesley thought it would and, nacherally, he was roarin’ ’round fine. We shook out the reef in the mains’l before noon-time of that first day, and later we set both tops’ls and that whoppin’ gauze balloon of the Lucy’s. And she carried ’em easy, too. We warn’t loafing altogether; we was makin’ nine knots right straight along. But that wasn’t pleasing Wesley.

“ Next day and the next it was the same story, and part of the next day it was lighter yet. We hove the log, and got only eight knots for twenty-four hours hand-runnin’. Then, almost all at once, from a nice summer breeze it jumped to a gale. And it was a gale—one of those healthy, able zephyrs that makes up north there and gets a good runnin’ start afore it tears things loose in the forties.

“ Whoo-o-ish it whistled! A regular old buster of a no’theaster—whoo-o-ish!—and Wesley dancin’ on and off the break while he watched it comin’ on. ‘I’m thinkin’,’ he says, ‘we can stow some of those summer kites for a while. Might put the tops’ls in gaskets, boys, and that balloon in stops. We won’t be likely to need them any more this trip. This is the breeze I’ve been waiting for—struck in a little late, but it’ll make up for lost time soon.’

From Reykjavik to Gloucester

"And it sure was making up for lost time. The mains'l pretty soon had to be tucked up, and on the next day tucked again. And before another day we had to take it in altogether, get the trys'l out the hold and fit that on. Now you know it was blowing some when Wesley Marrs had the Lucy under a trys'l and a yachtin' fellow somewhere 'round racing him for a thousand dollars a side; and, what was more, the name of the thing after they got into Gloucester.

"We went that way for thirty-odd hours, and Wesley was almost satisfied. 'Maybe,' says he, 'if this fine breeze holds, we'll make up for those yachtin' days in the fifties. What kind of weather, fellows, do you s'pose the Bounding Billow's making of it? Think now she's handling it like the Lucy, hay? I'd give something to know if she's carryin' a whole fores'l and both jibs right now. Boys,' he says, 'but this is fine weather. In forty-eight hours, and this fine breeze holds, we'll be raisin' Thatcher's twin lights!' Wesley was mighty well satisfied with the way things was lookin' just then.

"That was Friday night late. After midnight it was, for I went on watch at twelve o'clock. I remember well Wesley and Murdie Greenlaw at the wheel when I came out of the cabin door

From Reykjavik to Gloucester

to go for'ard. We was driving through it and she layin' over. Man, but she was layin' over. I'll tell you how she was layin' over. That very afternoon it was that Billie Henderson had walked along her weather run from her stern to her fore-rigging. You've heard of that trick, some of you. Yes, sir—we had a line on him in case he slipped—that's the truth.

“ Well, it must have been getting on toward one o'clock, for I was figuring on being called aft to take the wheel for my second hour ; and then in one more hour a fellow could go below and dry off and have a good sleep. We were driving through it—two jibs, fores'l and trys'l. We hadn't seen the top of her port-rail for more than two days ; and this was one of those nights when the water gets full of phosphorus. It'd been a new moon gone down, and rain that morning, and you all know how the water fires after rain and a new moon. It was fair afire now. And the Lucy ! she was leapin' from the top of one sea to the top of another. We made a lane you could see for a cable length behind, and there was blue smoke, I swear, coming from each side.

“ Her nose would poke under and we would get it all over. I had my elbow crooked in the fore-rigging so I wouldn't wash off. When she'd

From Reykjavik to Gloucester

rise, she'd throw the water over her shoulder, and it'd run the whole length of her deck and race over the taffrail. That was only the spray, mind you. She was taking it over the rail all the time, besides, as if she had no rail at all. The skipper and Murdie at the wheel must've been pulp. Three or four others were in the waist—five or six men besides the skipper had to be on deck all the time. We was all in oilskins and red-jacks, of course, and we was all properly soaked.

“ Well, we was whoopin' along ; we'd just shot by some lumberin' old tramp steamer that was making awful bad weather of it, and somebody in the waist'd just called out, ‘ We're this far, anyway, thank the Lord.’ The cook had his head out the fo'c's'le gangway—just a narrow slit to sing out to us on deck—when we saw the skipper jump into the main riggin' and look ahead, and then jump back on deck again as if he saw a ghost. He hollers :

“ ‘ If there ain't the Englishman ahead, and carryin' a two-reefed mains'l! A two-reefed mains'l! And goin' like a liner ! I'll be damned if I'll stand on the deck of the Lucy Foster and see the Bounding Billow beat her home. I'll bust the Lucy's spars, but I'll beat him. Bend on the stays'l. I guess the Lucy can carry as

From Reykjavik to Gloucester

much sail as that window-frame boat. Bend on that stays'l.'

"You can bet that shook the boys up. A stays'l! And her planks rattlin' then! Dan Ross—most of you know Dan—big Dan, that was lost on the Fredonia afterward—Dan was nearest me under the weather rail. He says, 'I'll fix that stays'l.' And he did fix her, as he thought. He yanks the halyards loose and they goes flyin' aloft. We could just make them out slinging between the fore and main rigging—like long devils, with the block on the end.

"Dan hollers out: 'Stays'l halyard-ends loose and can't get hold of 'em—they're aloft.'

"The skipper says: 'Go after them.'

"Dan roars back: 'What do you take me for?'

"'For a man,' hollers the skipper; 'but I guess I was mistaken.'

"'Show me a man crazy enough to go after them,' says Dan.

"'Here's one,' roars the skipper, and so help me, if he didn't start aloft. Blowing? My blessed soul, we needed cotton hooks to hang on by. The boys was curled up under the wind'ard rail with their fingers into the ring-bolts. And up went Wesley Marrs—to looard, mind you. And however he managed it—we couldn't half make

From Reykjavik to Gloucester

out what he was doing up there—but he got hold of them.

“Down he comes with the ends fast around his waist. ‘Here,’ he says to Dan, ‘take hold of that.’ He unwound about two fathom of it. ‘That’s one end of the stays’l halyards you run aloft a little while back. That snaps into the after upper corner of the stays’l, so long as we got to make things plain to you. And this’—he gave him the other end—‘this is what you haul on. Is that plain enough? Then see if you can hang on to it, so’s better men than yourself won’t have to go aloft in a gale to get them down again. Now then, up with that stays’l. Call all hands for’ard there, cook—and call all hands aft there, Murdie—and up with that stays’l! Up with it.’

“And up she went. Such a slattin’ afore we got her up! But she got there—and then! If she was leapin’ before she was high-diving now. The water was firing like I was telling you, firing like an ocean of big diamonds and white sulphur mixed; and there was that blue smoke you could almost smell coming out from both sides of her wake. I misdoubted if we’d ever get home. If I’d had a knife handy, you’d have seen the stays’l go into the sky. But I didn’t have a knife, nor nobody else on deck, and all we could do was to hope we’d get in to walk down Main Street

From Reykjavik to Gloucester

just once again, and swearin' we'd never ship another trip with that crazy Wesley Marrs, so long's we lived again. Yes, sir, that was an awful run home. We carried our stays'l past the Point. And that's the same Lucy and the same Wesley Marrs coming in the dock there now."

"And what happened to the Bounding Billow? Did you pass her?"

"The Bounding Billow? Hell, no. We got in Monday morning at five o'clock. There warn't any Bounding Billow in sight that night—just one of them ghost dreams of Wesley's. The Englishman didn't get along till about the middle of the week."

"And what did he have to say?"

"The Englishman? Oh, that was funny, too—but hold up a second and see what that telephone wants, one of you."

"It's the office, Petie. They want to know what Captain Marrs got."

"Oh, all right. He'll make fast and be up the wharf in a minute, tell them. He's getting ready to step ashore now."

It was a man of medium height and easy swing who came up the dock with half his crew in tow. He had the sunburned skin of a healthy boy and the vigorous jaw of a man of action. He spat out tobacco-juice as he rolled along, but his

From Reykjavik to Gloucester

teeth showed white and unconquerable when he grinned up at the look-out. It was the voice of a moderate blow, a summer gale at play, that answered the hail from Crow's Nest.

"Hulloh, Peter," it roared. "Any signs of fish up there, boy?"

"Hulloh, skipper. What you got?"

"Four hundred barrels."

"Good. Where'd you get 'em?"

"Off Monhegan mostly. One school off Middle Bank on the way down. All medium schools. How's the market?"

"Fourteen and a quarter to-day."

"Good. Report me to the office, will you?—four hundred barrels. Come along down, Peter, and wash the gurry out your throat. Tell 'em all up there to come."

"In a minute. Here, Johnnie"—Peter lit on a boy of tender years, a boy of an age that ordinarily would not have been allowed to breathe this smoky atmosphere, but in this case a boy who was sometimes suffered to skirt the edge of the blessed circle because of his tractable ways and certain useful connections. He was a purveyor of supplies and a nephew of the firm, a willing boy and not too obtrusive. "Here, Johnnie, telephone the office that the Lucy Foster hails for four hundred barrels, small schools

From Reykjavik to Gloucester

and fine fish—and take charge while we're gone. We'll be at the Anchorage—if anything heaves in sight. But make sure before you disturb us; don't get worried by any coasters or yachts, mind. Do a good job now, and I'll tell your uncle about you, and maybe some day he'll let you have a vessel of your own. Come along, fellows, and p'r'aps we can get it out of Wesley himself just what the Englishman did say after he got in and found the Lucy three days before him. And p'r'aps we c'n get a word out him 'bout his marriage—if it *is* coming off this fall."

And down the winding stairs the chief look-out and his staff worked their way. It was tack and jibe, until they reached the street below; then it was wear off and a straight run of it, in the wake of Wesley to the Anchorage.

Up in the Crow's Nest the flag went to the mast-head for the Lucy Foster, arrived with four hundred barrels of fine mackerel. And Johnnie, a born hero-worshipper, looked out to sea for incoming fishermen, bravely singing all the while :

"I'll bust her spars,"

Says Wesley Marrs,

"But I'll beat the Bounding Billow."



A FISHERMAN OF COSTLA





A Fisherman of Costla

I

THE captain of the coast steamer almost laughed aloud at the absurdity of the question. "Go to Kilronan, in the outer Arran Island, to-day? No, sir, not for all the money your clients have in prospect. Even if my steamer had not two loose plates forward, and her condenser all out of gear, as my engineer says, I would not head her out in the bay to-day—not for all the money of one of your American millionaires. No, sir."

"But consider the urgency," panted the stranger. "Consider——"

"Consider the urgency? Consider the steamer," retorted the captain. "Lord, you'd never need to say you've just arrived from strange parts. If you'd been in Galway for more than ten minutes, you'd have known that this howling westerly gale that's sweeping in on this coast would make a junk-pile in quick order of any old iron steamer of the tonnage of mine. In quick order, yes, sir—up on the rocks she'd go—it's

A Fisherman of Costla

all rocks on this coast. And then where would my captain's papers be? "

"Name your price," persisted the stranger. He dropped his suit-case, put his hand to his inside coat-pocket, and drew out a thick wallet. "Name your price. I'll charter the steamer for a week, and you can have her back at the end of twenty-four hours, and it's only two hours' run to Kilronan, as you said yourself. Two hours out and two hours back, four hours steaming besides the waiting while I'm looking over the records with your parish priest and parish clerk—six hours all told and my business will be done with. What do you say? Name your price."

"No, no, I'm sorry, but I would not try it even if my steamer was ready, for the value of the whole estate you say may be at stake. No, no," replied the steamer captain.

"Then what am I to do? At the hotel I stopped just long enough to make inquiries, and they sent me to you. They told me that if you would not take me to Arran, nobody out of Galway would take me, unless it were a Claddagh fisherman across the harbor in one of their little sailing-vessels. And then they added that if I could get a fisherman ready to risk it, it is more than likely he could not do anything against this storm—it's a head wind to Arran."

A Fisherman of Costla

"They told you right. Lord bless you, no hooker could ever beat out this gale. Kilronan bears about west from here, and this wind's straight from the west-northwest. If the wind was blowing from offshore now, why you might speak of taking a hooker, if you would find anybody crazy enough to try it. Though as for that part of it, you'll find Irishmen crazy enough to try almost anything—I mean if you can show 'em a half-decent reason for it. They won't do it just for the money, remember—no, sir, not for all the money that wallet of yours'll hold—but if you could work up their feelings——"

"If the wind were blowing from off-shore?" repeated the stranger absently. "But is there no place around here on the coast from which the wind blows toward Arran?"

"Ha! Why, that's so, too! There's the north shore—there's Costla. From Costla to Kilronan the wind won't be behind you, mind, but it will be a fair wind—fair enough for a passage. But, my soul, think of the risk."

"Risk?—in the boat?"

"In the boat?—yes—crossing Galway Bay in this gale."

"Would your fishermen here be afraid? They told me other tales of them, captain." The stranger smiled in an exasperating way.



A Fisherman of Costla

"See here," said the captain. "Don't you run away with any notion that our fishermen hereabouts won't fish when any other men on earth would go out and fish in small boats. But let me tell you, it's one thing to fish because the wife and children at home need the help, and another thing—here," the captain broke off with some heat, "look here now, and I'll tell you. A while ago you said you'd go to any labor and any risk to reach Kilronan to-day, and be back here to-morrow morning?"

"Yes," said the stranger, "any labor and any risk so as to be back here and aboard the train that will connect with the White Star steamer out of Queenstown to-morrow morning. If I don't do this thing, and take that steamer so as to be back in time, my trip over here is of no avail. And it means more than a dead loss of time and money to the firm. I'm a young lawyer in a big office, and this thing means a lot to me. You tell me what to do and I'll do it at any risk."

"You will? Well, you go to Costla—that's on the coast on the north side of Galway Bay, as I said. It's the nearest place on the mainland to Kilronan. There's a fair road from here to there; it's on the mail-car route that goes out of the western side of Galway. You go to Costla. First, of course, you go to the Royal Hotel up



A Fisherman of Costla

the street—that's where you just came from—and tell them you want a jaunting-car, a fast horse, and a good driver. Get Pat Kelley if you can, and have him arrange to have a fresh horse for you at Spiddle. There's always a fresh horse to be had at Spiddle, and that's half way to Costla. You ought to be at Costla Bay in two hours and a half. It's twenty-five miles. When you get to Costla, ask for Gerald Donohue. Anybody will tell you where to find him, though, there being two Gerald's, you want to ask for the right one. One has a son in the Coast Guards. You don't want him—he's old and stays ashore now. You want the other Gerald that's a fisherman and has no son in the Coast Guards. He did have a son that would be old enough for that now, but he lost him the time the last big wave swept over Glasher Rock. Anyway, you tell Gerald what you told me when you first hopped off that car a while ago. Tell him that if you can't get those records with the proper certification and be back aboard to-morrow morning's New York steamer out of Queenstown, your clients—a family of children, did you say?—well, tell him they'll lose a fortune. Tell Gerald that and put it strong to him. Tell him what you told me, that the fortunes of those children, whose father was Kilronan born, may be hanging on your getting

A Fisherman of Costla

to Kilronan and back by to-night, and trust Gerald to put you across the bay to Arran Island if any living man will do it. And if he gets you across to Arran, then he'll make small work of bringing you on to Galway afterward, for it will be a fair wind from Arran back to Galway. He'll only have to keep her from swamping on the way back. And if Gerald won't do it, you can give it up—no man on the coast will do it."

"Thank you, thank you, I'm off. O jarvey—" the stranger leaped to the jaunting-car—"to the Royal Hotel! Lash her now!"

The captain gazed after him. "The Lord save us, I wonder is there ever one of them American business men that's got time to take a full breath."

II

It was at ten o'clock in the morning that the American left the steamer-captain. At one in the afternoon he was down by a small stone quay at an inner point of Costla Bay talking to a fisherman of the place, Gerald Donohue, the right Gerald Donohue, the one that had no son in the Coast Guards. Stout, bearded, and hardy-looking was Gerald of the blue eyes and simple speech.

"Sure it's the moving tale you're telling me," he was saying. "But do you think what it means

A Fisherman of Costla

if my little vessel is lost? The wife and the small childer——”

“Well, as to that, Mister Donohue, I can only say that the heirs—the people we’re fighting for—will see that your family shall not want. When they hear the story, as hear it they must, for I’ll be with you and they’ll naturally make inquiries—if we’re lost then you can count on it that your family will not be forgotten. It won’t be a hundred pounds, or two hundred, or three hundred that they——”

Gerald raised his hand. “We’ll not speak of the money. The man that would cross Galway Bay to-day for money, and wife and childer behind him, would be staining his soul with the black marks of a sin that the fires o’ Purgatory would never burn out—never. But for Dannie Costello’s childer that has to fight for the money he left behind sure ’tis a hard thing. The childer that can’t get their own father’s money—man, but it is the hard nature that is fighting them. I knew Dannie for ten years before he left Arran—the one age we were. And him the manager of a boy before he was old enough to walk. And a fine, kind boy he was. And only the year before last he sent fifty pound at Christmas-time for the little stone church they’re trying to build in Kilronan. Yes, sir, the big heart had Dannie. And



A Fisherman of Costla

now he's dead, you tell me, and they're schemin', the villains, to keep the poor childer out o' the money. Sure an awful thing is law now, isn't it? Here, Tammie"—he turned to a twelve-year-old lad who was standing near and watching the surf break over the rocks below him. "Tammie, run up to the house like a good boy and get the two suits of oil-clothes—make haste now—while I will be reefing down the mainsail and taking in a bit of the jib. Make haste, Tammie, for it's makin' the wind is all the time. Yes, sir, it must be makin' when it isn't going down. And it's big boots and plenty of oil-clothes we'll need this day. And do yourself get into the hooker, sir, yourself and your valise, while I do be reefin' down."

The "hooker" was a black-painted, or rather black-tarred, jib-and-mainsail boat of perhaps twenty-five feet on deck and eight feet beam. Forward she was decked over, but aft was merely an open space, wherein was a lot of broken rock in her bottom for ballast. Having been used at odd times for carrying peat to the islands in the bay, a great deal of loose loam had managed to sift down into the crevices of the stone, thereby giving more than usual stability to the ballast.

The lawyer stood on the ballast and watched

A Fisherman of Costla

the fierce surf as it broke over the rocks that edged the little bay. He could not quite see the full glory of the surf of the greater bay outside, the bay they were soon to attempt to cross, but he saw enough to get a faint idea of what it might be like, and as he pondered over the prospect he began to experience his first slight sinking of the heart since he left Galway, and almost to wish that to somebody else had fallen what now promised to be a hazardous undertaking.

While the lawyer was soberly meditating, the fisherman was rushing preparations. Three reefs were put in the black mainsail, and the jib was taken in until not more than half its original size was spread. The hatch to the little hole forward was battened down and running gear overhauled. Gerald did not like the look of the jib. "It's old, and a touch of rot in it. If there was time, there's a bit of a storm-sail below I would put on her by way of a jib instead of that old rag, but there's not the time—here comes Tammie, with his load of boots and oil-clothes.

"Throw it aboard, Tammie.

"Ah, poor b'y, ye had a great load of it, sure enough. Here, sir—" he turned to his passenger— "take off your shoes and get into a pair of these boots, and put the oil-clothes over your other clothes. Be sure but you will need them."

A Fisherman of Costla

They were soon ready. "Push off, Tammie," said the fisherman to his boy. "Pole her off to the end of the quay, and then go back and tell your mother I won't be back for three days maybe, for I'll have to go to Galway to put the gentleman on his way. Go back now."

"Can't I go with you, father?" asked the boy.

"Go with me! The Lord forbid—sure the hair would rise off your head with the fright when you'd see the waves out in the big bay."

"I wouldn't be afraid with you, father."

"Whisht! and go along with you. 'Tis your mother wouldn't sleep till you was back again. Go home now, and tell her as I just told you to tell her——"

"She knows where you're going. When I asked for the big boots and oil-clothes, she asked me what you wanted them for, and I told her."

"You did? And what did she say?"

"She said, 'Tis the foolish man your father is, Tammie, but God speed him.' Can't I stay on the high rocks and watch you sail across, father?" pleaded the boy.

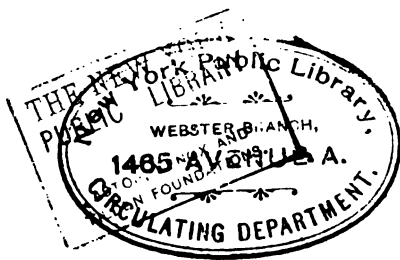
"No, b'y, no. It's too windy and cold there."

"But I want to see you sail the hooker across the bay, father. It's fast she'll sail in this wind, and I want to see her go."

"Then go up to the Coast-Guard station and



“Pole her off to the end of the quay.”



A Fisherman of Costla

watch from there with your cousin Malachi. 'Tis there you will be able to see beautiful from the look-out up top. Go now, Tammie, and say God-speed for us."

Under the fisherman's hands the little hooker was skilfully worked from out of this rock-strewn inlet of water known as Costla Bay into the much larger body of water known as Galway Bay. The American had only to dodge the spray as it came aboard, and Gerald to dodge with the hooker the rocks that stuck their sharp points above the surface.

"Look across now," said Gerald—they were clear of the sunken rocks inside—"that's Arran you see ahead. Eleven mile from here—just beyond where you see the water all white. That's the surf breaking there—if you can see it."

"I think I can see it, but I'm not sure." From the stern of the jumping hooker the lawyer was trying to see things ahead and at the same time keep his feet.

"Not sure, ye say? Faith, but it's the weak eyes a man gets when he stops long ashore. That's Kilronan, and the long stone wall there is the pier. That's where we are going, if God is willing—to the other side of that pier. Now keep under the rail and out of the wet, if you can, for we're fair into it now."

A Fisherman of Costla

What the American knew of the practical workings of the sea had been gained altogether from his recent trip between New York and Queenstown. For one twenty-four hours during that six days' passage there had been enacted what the saloon referred to as "an awful storm." Some spray had come aboard the main deck of the liner, and most of the passengers lay in their berths while the awful storm should go by. Our young lawyer had been among the brave ones who had stuck it out in the smoking-room. He remembered very well how he had been thinking of the future time when he should be reeling off the details of that storm to home circles. But that steamer was 600 feet in length, with a wall of sixty feet from the water's surface to the top-rail, and, to preserve the proportions, this little hooker was about the size of one of the liner's deck-boats, with less than two feet of freeboard—that is, when she stood on an even keel. To preserve the proportions, this little vessel should be now sailing in a mill-pond in a summer zephyr. Even that something less than two feet of freeboard would have been a most comforting thing were it there now, which it was not, for the hooker by now, working clear of the main shore, and the wind coming abeam, was taking a great slant. At first she only rolled over to her

A Fisherman of Costla

deck amidships, and the water did not bother them over-much. Spray had come across her bows from the very first, but, as they went on, sheets of spray began to come over bows, midship, and quarter, and slap them from head to toe even when they crouched back in the stern. Still, even the lawyer did not mind that. He had some philosophy in his make-up, and, having been warned by that surf over the rocks of Costla Bay, he had made up his mind to some discomfort. But it was not until the hooker had worked out from the lee of the land for a mile or so, and the real force of the wind from all the wide Atlantic began to hit her, that the young man from the inland region of a great continent began to see more clearly than ever that he had embarked on an enterprise of some risk. He derived his greatest pleasure, after they were well into it, from discovering the rail when it showed above the sea, as it did every now and then when the fisherman held her up a trifle.

The fisherman seemed to read the young man's thoughts. "I could make it a bit more pleasant," he explained, "but we would never make Kilronan if I did. If we went to looard we'd never in this world work her back in the wind."

"I see," said the lawyer, "but doesn't she lay

A Fisherman of Costla

rather away over sometimes? Isn't there danger?"

"Danger?—not a bit. Not yet, anyway. Don't you worry now. So she shows the rail anywhere near the level water you're safe as if you was in the Coast-Guard station we left behind us. 'Tis when she puts that plank above her rail under—that plank that's used to hold the turf in her whenever we have a big load of it—now when that goes under water will be the time to say a quick litany, especially if the ballast shifts."

"That plank under! Good Lord! wouldn't she turn bottom up then?"

"I couldn't say. I never tried her, but it is likely, sir."

"And if she tips over, what shall we do?"

"Troth, and I couldn't say as to that, either; but swim, I'm thinkin'."

"Swim! I'd have but a small chance, then, when I can barely swim a hundred yards in the smoothest water."

"Faith, then we'd last the one as long as the other, for sorra the stroke at all can I swim. But that's neither here nor there, for it's the small chance we'd have if she capsized here. Look at her now, sir."

The hooker was then lifting so that the lawyer,

A Fisherman of Costla

gazing at her forward deck, could easily imagine himself looking uphill; and when she pitched down and her bows went clear under until she was all water to her mast, he thought she was about to engulf herself. That was happening almost continuously, but she did have steady streaks. When the wind was steady, she simply lay down while the sea rushed over her side and swirled over the feet of the two men in the stern.

"The Lord save us, but she's making great time, isn't she, sir? Great speed, but maybe 'twouldn't do her no harm if you was to keep the bailer going. That's the bailer, that tin pail there by your valise. Man, but that valise is catching it—and a finer valise I never set eyes on. I know it's a shame, too, to make a regular-paid passenger work his way, but with yourself bailing you'll have a better chance to make that same passage you'll be paying for later, if you make it. 'Tis the great sport sailing when you're sure you'll get home all right, isn't it, sir?"

"Yes," answered the lawyer, "it must be." His voice had not the viking ring, but his bailing was all that could be desired.

The hooker footed on, with the seas tossing her about as a wooden bucket is tumbled in a beach surf. She went down into the hollows until the lawyer thought she was never coming up, and

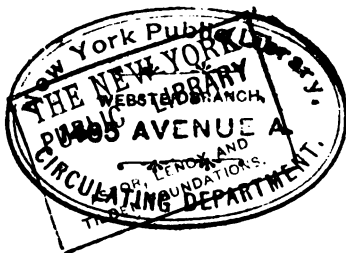
A Fisherman of Costla

she went up on the heights until he thought she would stay up altogether. The seas were green and each had a crest of white that reminded the landsman of the long teeth of an angry dog. The body of the sea would rush on, and by its sheer weight throw the hooker far and high, then the white teeth would leap up and pounce down and make as if trying to tear her planks apart.

The lawyer, to gather inspiration, would look up now and then from his bailing to study the face of the fisherman. Once he fancied he saw a fleeting shade of worryment in the blue eyes. With some trepidation he asked if there were anything wrong. If this man of the sea was disturbed, certainly it was time for himself, a landsman, to watch out.

"That jib there," answered the fisherman after a long gaze forward; "I've been thinkin' it won't hold much longer. Beginnin' to rip it is at the foot of it. Stand up now and hold the tiller when I put her in the wind. Wait, wait until I put her into the wind. Have a care now, and let me show you. By the Lord, but that was a blast! Och, it's gone! May the divil go with it!" The jib had ripped from the foot up, and was slatting off in strips to leeward, like half a dozen long-tailed burgees.





A Fisherman of Costla

"Hold her as she is," said the fisherman. "She'll stay there now while I dive into the hold for'ard for a bit of storm-sail that we'll make a jib of. I always mistrusted that old jib."

The hooker rode the waves so much more easily with her head to the wind that the lawyer, though he had not the slightest idea of how it was all brought about, wondered why they had not done something like this before. Certainly this was better than to let her heel over until she threatened to roll bottom up.

Forward the fisherman had got out a small triangle of canvas, and was swiftly making ready to attach it to the old jib sheet and halyards. To expedite matters he was forced to lie out on the little bowsprit and allow himself to be buried with that plunging stick every time a sea came his way. He quickly made a pair of rough hanks of a piece of old line, cut away such pieces of the old jib as threatened to hamper operations, came back inboard and hoisted away on his halyards.

"There," said he, jumping aft, beard, hair, and the oil-skins running brine, "there. Now we'll go our way again."

The hooker lay over again, and the lawyer resumed his bailing, stopping only long enough to ask Gerald why he could not have kept her as she was when he was putting the new sail in place.

A Fisherman of Costla

"She was so steady then," he said, "so steady—that is, compared to what she is now."

"Steady, yes," said Gerald, grimly. "A pity she wouldn't be half-way steady, and she hove-to. But let her lay so long enough and think you where would she be, or where would you be or me be? Look over the rail at your elbow now. See where the sea breaks over that ledge. Twenty feet high it spouts, and that ledge runs far out from the shore into the bay. That's where she'd drift, and we'd be fools enough to let her. How long would you live, I'm asking you, sir, in that b'iling—if you was lucky enough not to break your bones in the first smash?"

"Oh," said the lawyer, "I didn't know." After a pause he continued: "No, I didn't know. If I knew what it was going to be I would never have dragged you out here, nor come out here myself—no, not for all the reputation I ever expect to make. I didn't know."

"What!" exclaimed the fisherman, "and Dannie's childer dependin' on ye?"

"Oh, I forget them. Yes, I would come—but what's that awful place ahead?"

"That's where the shoal makes out from Arran. That's the bad spot for us. 'Tis that we'll have to weather if ever we make Kilronan. Man, but it's cruel to look at, isn't it now?"

A Fisherman of Costla

There's where we'll have to let her take the wind in full. All this time, d' y' see, we've been close-hauled, but we'll have to swing her off now if we'd pass here. Watch out now and get a hold of something if you love life."

He put the tiller up into the wind, and around came her head. The wind took her fairly, and over she went. The lawyer thought she was going altogether, and the fisherman said "Holy Mary!" Her solid rail went far under, and the turf-board above that went clear under also, and the water that rushed into the open part of her aft seemed about to swamp her.

"She's going!" called the lawyer—"My God, she's going!" He grabbed the tiller in his excitement.

"Let be the tiller—I'm steering! Take a grip of my waist, or anything, but let be the tiller!"

"I'm up to my knees," said the lawyer.

"To your knees, is it! Man, but you'll be up to your waist, maybe, before she stops, and then over your head, maybe. Hold on now—hold on yet. Holy Mary, but she's getting it. But, by the Lord, she'll make it yet. She's coming, by my soul, she's coming. 'Twas a blow that, but she'll right yet. Give her a chance, give her a chance now."

A Fisherman of Costla

For a full two minutes she lay there, within an ace of being hove-down before she showed signs of coming up. Then slowly she began to right, with the fisherman nursing her. Slowly, slowly she came up. She was safe at last. For a while she was logy as any old derelict with the loose water that sloshed about in the open space aft, but she had righted and that was the really important thing.

"A bad little place that, sir," observed Gerald when he had got her straightened away again. "A point makes out from the shoals there, d' y' see? We had to shoot around it like, y' see, and that made all the trouble. 'Twas that more than all the rest of the passage, though the Lord knows 'tis rough enough it is—but 'twas that's been on my mind the last half hour. You didn't know that? Why would you?—but the Lord be thanked we're by it now. There's been more than one vessel capsized and more than one crew lost there, though 'twasn't all of them had ballast that stood like ours. Man, but the turf between the stones under our feet—'tis as good as the pig iron and the melted lead they puts in the bottom of the yachts. Yes, sir, every bit as good. When it holds, I mean. Sometimes it don't hold. And maybe it was the hand o' God—that jib blowing out back there. If it

A Fisherman of Costla

didn't go then, 'twould go that last time and that was a bad place to be stopping to bend on a new sail—don't you think but it was, sir ? ”

“ Yes,” said the lawyer. Still bewildered, he stood looking back at the boiling point they had passed. “ Awful, awful, wasn't it ? ” he exclaimed.

“ Yes, sir—awful, you might say, but don't stop bailing now because we're past it. She'll be a bit livelier, d' y' see, with some of the water out of her. That's why I have the stern of her with a few planks out—so the water that comes over the rail will go back in the sea again.” He grinned slyly. “ She gets clear of a lot of water that way. But keep bailing—you're doin' fine at the bailing, sir.”

The lawyer continued to bail, and Gerald held to the tiller until the happy moment when they shot around the end of the pier. “ There,” said Gerald, “ we're in at last, and here's Kilronan.” He pointed the hooker up for the pier, cast loose the halyards, let the sails run, and dropped her gently alongside the pier steps.

“ And are we here ? ” asked the lawyer, as if he could hardly believe it.

“ Here you are—yes, sir—Kilronan. Go up those steps ahead, and from the top of the pier you can see the parish priest's place. The parish

A Fisherman of Costla

priest and the parish clark will have all the records you'll be wanting, I think. And there's a notary or something like that who will do the swearing the clark can't do. And while you're gone I'll be eating some bread and fish and making a cup of tea, for I've had no dinner this day and I'm fair famished. When you get back, sir, we'll put for Galway. Make haste, sir, and if the Lord is good, you'll be in time for your Queenstown steamer in the morning."

In two hours the young lawyer came back, radiant. "It's all right, it's all right," he sang out to Gerald.

"Is it? Well that's fine. And now we'll off to Galway. Come aboard, sir."

"Will it be bad going to Galway? Any more of those bad shoal points to be passed?"

"Not a bit. 'Tis only running we'll be going to Galway in this wind. We have but to hold her up past the light-house till we're well into Gregory Sound, and we're all right. She'll make great dives with her head, but it's hard to capsize her that way—head first. 'Twill be rough, maybe, till we're past the Sound, but after that we'll put for the lee of the islands, and with a fair wind and smooth water and Dan Costello's childer in mind and we'll have you in Galway to-night, with the help of God."

A Fisherman of Costla

That night in his room at the hotel in Galway, and while he was waiting for the porters to put his few pieces of baggage in the jaunting-car, the American drew out his thick wallet to settle up with the fisherman. He laid five £10 Bank of England notes on the table. "There, Captain Donohue," said he, "there's your £50 as promised, and your work was worth it ten times over."

Donohue regarded him with wonder. "Fifty pounds? No, no—" he pushed the money back across the table—"no, no; I'm not taking £50 out of you, sir. Let me have two pounds, a pound for to-day, and a pound for another day I'll be waiting here while the gale blows by."

"Two pounds? Don't be foolish now, Captain. I said this morning that I'd give you £50 to take me across Galway Bay. And here are the fifty pounds that I said I'd give you."

"Yes, yes, you said you'd give me it, but I never said I'd take it. Put up your money. It isn't for the money I'd be risking making a widder of Mora and orphans of the childer. No, sir; two pounds is my price this day—one day to-day, and another day to-morrow when I won't be able to get back to Costla, by the look of things now. No, no, sir; I'm telling you now 'tis never for

A Fisherman of Costla

money I'd do it. Forty years ago, when I was a little lad, I knew Dannie Costello. 'Twas Dan put me many's the time in the way of makin' a shillin' with him now and again. Dan Costello was good to me. And 'twas a long ways a shillin' went in them days—starvation days we had then. Yes, 'tis true, we haven't too many comforts now, but we manage to get along. When you see the childer again, sir—and if they are anything like their father, sir, sure they'll be the fine childer—when you see them, give my respects to them, sir. A friend of their father's, tell them. Tell them that, if you will, and I'll thank you. Two pounds—no more, no more. What? The sail? Well, put in a pound for the old sail. Troth, and it was an old sail, and I'll be cheating you at that. Three pounds I'll take. No more. I couldn't. Thank you, sir, and hurry now if you would catch the cars for Queenstown. Good-by, sir, good-by, and remember me kindly to Dan Costello's childer."

A Fisherman of Costla

III

When the roar of the hurrying train had become no more than one of a thousand other far-away echoes in the night, the fisherman returned through the narrow streets of the old city to the big dock, to the end of which was tied his little hooker. He sloshed around with the tin pail and bailed out such water as he could find by feeling in the dark. He shook the reefs out of the mainsail, hoisted it clear to the blocks, that it might have a chance to dry, and then looked up at the shadow of it as it hung. "There, that's off my mind, and now for a little bit of comfort." He felt his way forward and dropped through the hatchway into the little hole of a cabin.

Here he groped about in the extreme darkness until his fingers rubbed against a piece of a candle and a card of matches that protruded from somewhere up between the deck-planking and a transverse beam. The matches he struck one after the other until he got one that would stay alight long enough to get the candle going. He raked over the ashes on the little stone slab that served him for a hearth, but found them all damp. "Man," he murmured, "but the water surely came through her old j'int's this day." He went to a locker, took out a small piece of very



A Fisherman of Costla

soft wood, from which, after whittling into shavings, he managed to get a tiny blaze. "The very air has salt water in it," he whispered to himself. After another while he felt hopeful of getting a kettle of water to boil. "'Twas good the locker's half-way dry with the wood in it. We'll have tea yet, by the Lord." The thought gave him intense satisfaction. "A pot of fine hot tea, yes, and something to eat with it. And I'm fair famished." From the bottom of a tin box he took out a sliver of salt fish and a scone of bread. "Faith, but that's fine luck—just enough for a bite for myself. Not a great deal of it—a child could eat it, and Father Doherty himself wouldn't say it was too much for a fast-day, but 'twill go fine after the wet, hard day—fine, fine." He took out the last pinch of tea from the caddy into the kettle.

The water was slow to boil, and the smoke of the fire drove him to the hatchway for fresh air. "I'll have to get a little chimbley for this place another year, the smoke of it sometimes is fair overpowerin'." He gazed out of the hatch and across the dark waters. "A wee little bit more and I could see Costla Bay with the lights in the Coast-Guard station—yes. Mora, 'tis little is the sleep you'll be giving yourself this night nor another night till I'm home again. Sure the

A Fisherman of Costla

childer themselves, the wee little ones, will be asking for their father when they hear the wind scream over the rocks of Costla. And off in America now—what place was it that young man said?—some saint city away, oh, far away, from the coast. But never mind. ‘If ever you come t’ America, Captain Donohue—’ says he. ‘I’m no captain,’ says I. ‘I’m master with one grown lad for a crew, of a little black hooker—a fisherman of Costla am I,’ says I. ‘Well, captain or no captain,’ says he, ‘there’s commanders in the R’yal Navy,’ says he, ‘and in every other navy,’ says he, ‘that wouldn’t crossed Galway Bay to-day for all their hopes of promotion. And if ever you come to St. Louis’—that’s it, St. Louis, by my soul—‘if ever you come to St. Louis, be sure to come to me, and ’tis myself and Dan Costello’s children will have the warm welcome for you—yes,’ he said that. Oh, oh, the poor childer that’s the thousands of miles livin’ from where their father was born. And havin’ the law to fight with it! Wirra, wirra, but the Lord needs to be good to childer that’s got the law to fight. Yes, indeed, yes.”

He took another long look toward Costla ere he dropped below. He noted the progress of the boiling kettle of tea. “In a minute ’twill be done. A bite to eat, a sup to drink, and my

A Fisherman of Costla

pipe, and then to a good sleep. My pipe, where is it? Yes, yes, to be sure, where I left it on the shelf in the bunk." He reached across the bunk and began to feel about for the pipe. The weight of his arm on the blankets caused him to disturb a small body that was huddled deep among the bed-clothes. The body, squirming, startled the fisherman. "My soul! what's that!"

The bundle rolled over and spoke. "It's me, father."

"Tammie, Tammie, you scart me most to death. How on earth came you here, Tammie?"

"I asked mother could I come, and she said yes, and the driver of the mail-cart took me up. I wanted to be sure you got to Galway. You know you said maybe the gale would last so you mightn't be home for three days, and I wanted to go back and tell mother in the morning."

"Back to Costla in the morning? And if the mail-car is full and no room for the likes of you?"

"Then I can walk, father."

"The Lord save us, but it's little boys that makes us ashamed, with the faith they has," said Gerald. "Here, come out of that bunk that's as wet as the wide bay, till I put in it some of my old clothes from the locker—the locker, the

A Fisherman of Costla

only dry place in the hooker, and it isn't over-dry at that. They'll be poor bed-clothes, but they'll be half-way dry for you, alanna. And how did you come aboard anonst to me?"

"I was waiting for you since the mail-cart got in at eight o'clock. I saw you when you came in the dock, and then I saw you and the American gentleman go to the hotel. I knew you would be back here when I saw you go to the station with him, so I came down here and I was waiting for you here, but I fell asleep while I was waiting, father."

"Oh, the poor b'y. And you're hungry, I'll be bound, Tammie?"

"A little, father."

"'A little, father'? Come here by the fire. You're fair famished. Don't try and hide it from me. Can't I see it in the mouth and the eyes of you—'tis fair famished you are. Here now, here's the fine dried hake, and the fine scone your mother baked yesterday mornin,' and the fine hot tea. Eat and drink now and then go to sleep with you."

"And won't you eat too, father?"

"Me eat? Sure, didn't me and the gentleman ate till we almost busted at the hotel?"

"At the hotel? What did you have there, father? Was it fine? and a lot of it?"

A Fisherman of Costla

“ ‘ Fine? and a lot of it ’? There was everything any man could think of, and a lot some men could never think of. There was turkey and duck and puddin’——”

“ Plum-puddin’, father? ”

“ Plum-puddin’ and three other kinds.”

“ Ooh ! ”

“ And pasties and grapes and jellies and oranges and bananas and cake—oh, there was lashin’s of everything, things I don’t know the names of at all.”

“ M-m-m—but you did eat a lot for the little time you was in the hotel, father.”

“ For the little time? Of course. We raced through it so we wouldn’t miss the cars. And how did you come to know we was in the hotel only a little time? ”

“ Don’t you remember me saying I was outside in the road to see you come out and go up the street with the gentleman? ”

“ I forgot that. But you was outside all the time? Watchin’ your betters? Tammie, don’t ever you do that again. You don’t know what private business they might be wantin’ to talk over. Don’t ever you do that again, Tammie. And have another mug o’ tea now.”

“ Yes, father.”

“ And ate up the fish and bread.”

A Fisherman of Costla

"It's all eat up, father."

"Sure, and so it is. O Tammie, only all the shops is closed, but 'tis we two, just the two of us down here, would be having the fine supper now—me, with pound notes in my pocket. But there's a little droppeen o' tea left, alanna. Take it and finish it up now, like a good b'y."

"I'm full, father."

"And you're sleepy by the looks of you."

"A little, father. I was up at four o'clock this morning. I was up that time you left this morning to see if the hooker was all right when you heard the gale coming on. I saw you goin' out, though you didn't see me, 'cause it was dark—ooh, wasn't it dark, m-m-m—" He winked his eyes, rested his head against the edge of the bunk, and suddenly went off to sleep.

The fisherman bent over him. "The poor b'y, tired to death he is with his five-and-twenty mile and the mail-car this evenin'. Well, well, the faith of a child!" He gathered him up and laid him tenderly in the bunk. "'Tis old rags that's under you, poor b'y, but they're half dry and maybe they'll save you from going back to your mother with your lungs choked with the cold."

He turned to the fire. From the board that had served as a plate for Tammie he swept off

A Fisherman of Costla

the crumbs and swallowed them with relish. What was left of the tea he poured out into a mug—less than half a mug it made—and drank it off. “My soul, but that’s fine.” He smacked his lips over it. He kept smacking while he was making ready to light his pipe by a dying ember that he coaxed from the hearth. With his pipe going, he leaned back against the planks of the hooker’s side, and through the smoke and half light regarded the face of the lad as it shone from among the pile of old clothes in the bunk.

“And to think of him walking the twenty-five mile over the road to Costla in the mornin’. Many’s the time I walked it myself at his age, and I know what it is. But it’s a stout lad I was to him with his little thin legs, and the little feet and toes blue with the cold, and maybe nobody along the whole way to know how far he came, and to ask him in to have a bite to ate and a sup to drink. Glory be, but is that water?”

He shifted about and felt his back. “Water, no less, and there isn’t a j’int in her old bones the sea didn’t squeeze through to-day. But she’s the greatest little one of them all out of Costla. I wouldn’t give her for some that’s twice as young. Thirty-five year this summer. Thirty-five year—the prime of life. Many’s the gale my own father sailed her. And many’s the gale my-

A Fisherman of Costla

self has sailed her, and many a gale I'll sail her yet, with God's blessing. Sure I'd like to know the time she made across the bay this day. My, but she fair leaped across the bay. Ah, ah, but the bones of me is getting old. They crack with every move I make—with every move, yes. And that young man from America, God-speed to him. And the poor childer of Dan Costello—the poor, poor childer—the Lord pity them! If I was gone now, 'tis the hard time my own would have. You're a brave little man, Tammie, but what could you do ag'in' the world—poor, poor Tammie—poor, poor childer."

His eyes, turning from the figure in the bunk, regarded intently the red glow of the fire on the hearth. The glow became duller under his gaze and the air about him grew colder. It occurred to him that a little more wood on the fire would be a fine thing, but when he came to look in the locker there was no more wood. "Glory be," he said, softly, "but it went fast." He thought to close the hatch, but, looking up, his eyes were caught and held by the shine of the stars. "The blessed little stars!" he whispered; "even when it's windy and cold it is, ye're there to make the night fine. And the little bit of candle"—he strove to shield it for a moment from the wind—" 'tis no use, 'twill soon be out. And it's falling

A Fisherman of Costla

asleep anonst to myself I am and maybe the little lad cold in the bunk."

He tucked the blankets more closely about the boy, laid the tips of his fingers on the flushed cheek, and whispering softly, "Tammie, alanna, is it asleep you are?" bent his head low for an answer. The boy's gentle breathing was the best answer. "That's good, and now, maybe, I'll get a bit of sleep myself—'twas the long wet day this day—yes, the long wet day."

But, tired as he was, he forced eyes and ears to do duty for a while yet. He must make certain that all was well. Listening, he made out that beneath the old hull the tide was still running. He hearkened for some minutes to the sound of it. Less noise there was now to be sure, but wasn't that to be expected with the slack water coming on? Once more he gazed up through the hatchway. The stars were yet shining—not so shiny maybe as a while ago, but how else would they be and the gray dawn coming on? The fire, dying a minute back, was dead altogether now, but who could blame it with not so much as the shaving of a match to put on it? Sure even a man would die and he wasn't fed—yes. And the candle, the little bit of candle, going—no, but gone out entirely. And my own pipe gone out with it.

A Fisherman of Costla

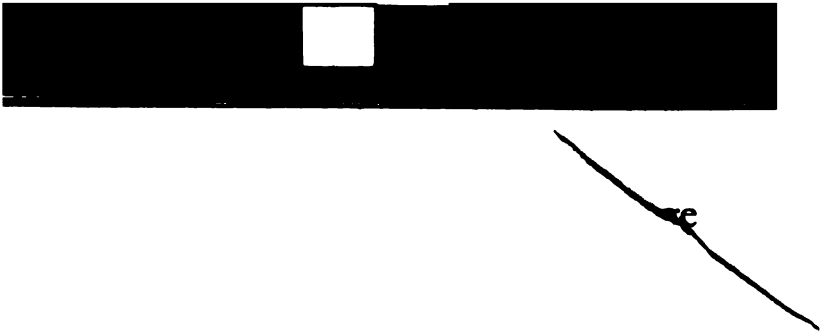
He lay quiet for a time before he moved a hand to take the pipe from his lips, but somehow he couldn't get a match to light. Well, there'd been smoking enough. And, after all, why should the pipe be going when everything else was gone? Sure all the light and heat was gone. Pipe, candle, stars, fire—all gone out. But Tammie—listen—yes, he was sleeping fine. The poor boy, poor Tammie—the poor, poor little Costello childer—the poor fatherless childer everywhere—to all poor childer may God be good—may God be good——

Gradually the weary head sagged until it was fairly on the shoulder nearest the bunk; gradually the legs, which had been drawn up at the knees, straightened out until they found a brace against the edge of the hearthstone; unnoticed, the pipe slipped from the relaxing fingers; softly the lips murmured beneath the beard—"to all poor childer may God be good"—the shaggy head settled into the peak of the hooker—"may God be good"—and this fisherman of Costla, his day's work done, was off for his night's rest. The morrow would bring its own labors.



**TOMMIE OHLSEN'S WESTERN
PASSAGE**





Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

A LONG the rocky shores of Old Cape Ann an easterly gale was stirring. In from the sea by way of the Point, across the harbor, and through the streets of Gloucester it moved boisterously. Up on the hill it sent unfastened blinds aswirling, jarred bricks from unstable chimneys, and eventually forced all the old ladies with the shawls to draw in their heads, slam down the window-sashes, and protest, with tight lips and shaking heads, that not for some time yet would it be safe for a body to venture out—no indeed, not even if the glass was arisin'. Down along the wharf-front it whistled through halyards, stays, and the unclew'd tops'ls of vessels in the docks, and from the more lofty roofs picked up and skied to the clouds everything that was not made fast with at least a double hitch. The most heavenward structure down that way, the observation-tower of the fish-syndicate, shook and bent

Tommy Ohlsen's Western Passage

as if it were not more than a church-steeple, and the very top of the tower, the "Crow's Nest," swayed in a way to suggest to one imaginative inmate the snapping of a whip, and to another, this one even more imaginative possibly, the evolutions, as he put it, of a burgee to the main truck. It was a northeast gale from Newfoundland to Cape Cod, the Weather Bureau said, with some minor wrecks along the coast.

Up in Crow's Nest they read all the weather reports, but it took more than weather reports to disturb their peace of mind. They knew that a fleet of distressed coasters had come bumping into the harbor over night for refuge, and that a string of storm-flags was still flying from the roof of the Custom-house—they could see all that and a lot more from their aery, but they were not worrying particularly up in Crow's Nest. It was too bad, of course, about the coasters, but coasters and fishermen weren't the same—not by a blame sight, not by a ding-blame sight—not meaning any disrespect to the coasters. And as for the storm-flags, a lot of wind out to sea was no reason that there'd be lives lost on the Banks. Wind, just plain wind, never hurt anybody. And this was only a summer gale anyway, and it was able vessels and able seamen sailing out of Gloucester. This breeze might give the passengers on ocean-

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

liners something to talk about on winter-nights for a few years after they got back to the prairies again, but good Lord ! there were skippers out of Gloucester who, if they happened to be in a hurry home, wouldn't bother to reef for this—no, sir, wouldn't stop to reef, but keep her coming all the way. Lord, yes, keep her coming all the way.

They were doing very well up in Crow's Nest this tempestuous morning. With a fine drying fire in the stove, and close by the stove a new level of fresh, inviting sawdust, with what looked like a sufficiency of tobacco in sight and what appeared to be a disposition to pass it around, with hatches drawn and a new tin-patch on the roof—with all tight and dry and snug, why shouldn't they be doing well ? The storm without seemed only to better the humor of those within. They hearkened to the roaring of the gale outside, and they all began to feel as if they had just come off watch—a hard watch in the thick o' fog, with sheets straining and seas breaking over her quarter—and bathed in the glow that comes of that kind of thinking and wrapped twice around in the belief, on this particular morning, that in all Gloucester their quarters were not to be improved upon, could they be feeling otherwise than comfortable up in Crow's Nest ?

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

The helpers, who clung to the locker-seats like barnacles, felt to the full the measure of all this comfort. Blissfully they sat and smoked and spat toward the outlying parts of the box of sawdust. To be sure, they did have their little troubles. Every little while, in obedience to "Old Peter's" voice of authority, somebody or other would have to detach himself from his position on the locker and stand his watch. With a lingering motion that suggested something of the tenacious love of a periwinkle for a low-water rock, the commanded one would tear himself off, make his way to the port-hole, take a look out, and report to old Peter, the one man there who drew pay, and who, sitting in his easy-chair with his feet on the edge of the sawdust-box in the centre of the room and his back to the seaward-side, should have been enjoying the greatest comfort of all. He should have been, it would seem, but for an hour now the volunteers had reported nothing but mist and white-caps out to sea, and Peter was getting nervous. The picture of the catastrophe, if one of the firm's vessels should steal in unreported, photographed itself on his mind so frequently that he felt impelled at length to ease his nerves, even at the risk of slightly wounding the feelings of an aide-de-camp or two of his staff. "With this gale behind 'em," said

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

Peter, by way of breaking more gently to them his very low estimate of their worth as look-outs—"with this gale behind 'em, it seems to me there ought to be some of the fleet comin' along soon. In a breeze of this kind, the fairest kind of a wind to the east'ard, and enough of it to suit the most desp'rate sail-carriers out of Gloucester, they oughter be comin' along like a drove of wild horses pretty soon, don't you think? Anyway, maybe I'd better take a look for myself. No offence meant; but you lads brought up ashore, you haven't the eyes for it quite—not quite. And you're gettin' to love your comfort too well. Anyway, I callate I'd better take a look for myself."

He rose regretfully, stuffed his pipe into his pocket and had a look for himself.

What he saw, off-shore, was a tumble of long seas and a field of scud flying before the gale in many patches; and, inshore, the swift advance of many lines of bold-marked ridges piling high in a green-white tumult above the rocks of the Cape. He viewed them calmly, as a man who has fought them views them—to sea, the crested, sweeping waves and the flick-lashing of the wind whipping over them; and along the rocky shore, the bold rollers tumbling over, piling up, and crashing high, and the wake of the fierce under-tow swirl-

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

ing back again. He watched it for a while, this play of the sea, not alone that little part of the sea almost beneath him, but also that greater part far out from him, and then took note of the sky above; not near so thick massed now were the clouds, as when he had last looked out, an hour ago, nor driving so turbulently, and yet they were still flying with great speed. "They'll be gone by noon," thought Peter, "and we'll walk home to dinner with the sun shining through again, or I don't know."

Musing thoughtfully over that, he drew his pipe from his pocket and struck a match. The match sputtered and went out. He lit a second, and then—then it was he saw her. Waiting for the second match to blaze, and looking unpreparedly out through her port-hole, but with an habitual watchfulness withal, his keen old eyes saw her. A shaft of sunlight breaking prematurely through the thinning clouds struck her and lit her up, just as his eyes happened to rest on the right spot, and he saw her—a flash of a handsome fisherman, long and narrow—black hull that shone and gold stripe that glittered. Jumbo, jib, fore, main, and both topsails—in his admiration he noted every sail of her, as might any landsman who had never learned to take in hull and rig entire, the whole thing at a glance. "By the Lord, but

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

she's an able vessel!" breathed Peter, "and her skipper, whoever he is, is a-sockin' it to her. Drive her, drive her, God bless you, drive her. Two tops'ls! By the Lord, but you're the lad to get her home—drive her!"

Unconsciously he had spoken the last few words aloud, and now the whole room was at his shoulder. It took such an announcement as that to wake them up. "Two tops'ls did you say? In this breeze? Where?—where?"

"Look," answered Peter with an indicating arm. "Look. See her now? Where's the glasses? Maybe I c'n make her out." He looked, and knew her. "It's the Nannie O, by the Lord! See her now?" They looked and saw her. They did not know her from any other vessel, but they saw the low, black hull with all the white sail. Tearing around the Point she was then, with her lee cat-heads just showing out of water.

"Are you sure that's the Nannie, Peter?" inquired a doubting one at his shoulder. "Are you sure? Wasn't it only yesterday some skipper reported leaving her seven or eight hundred miles to the east'ard only a few days ago and she not ready to leave for two or three days. Somewhere up on the Grand Banks she was then—last Thursday, I think it was—and not goin' to leave

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

for two or three days—and now only Tuesday. That skipper got in only yesterday afternoon, Peter, and he made a pretty fair passage himself, they said."

"Hush," chided Peter, "there's passages and passages. It's Tommie Ohlsen himself. Ain't he a dog though? Four lowers and two tops'ls, his deck awash to the hatches, two men to the wheel and the rest of the crew huggin' up under the weather-rail—yes, and glad they're so near home, I'll bet. Only yesterday afternoon, Wallie Manning—the Cleopatra—in from a shackin' trip—it's him what one o' you meant, I s'pose—Wallie reports the Nannie seven hundred and fifty mile to the east'ard and not goin' to leave afore Saturday night. 'Any message?' says Wallie to Tommie—'any message?' 'Nothin' particular,' says Tommie. 'Might tell the old man, when you get in, he might be gettin' a new fore-gaff ready for the Nannie. This one we got now went to hell on the way out—fixed it up as well as we could, but if we has to jibe her over again all standin' something's liable to happen to the Nannie if it comes thick and there's rocks under our lee goin' home. Main topm'st a little sprung, but we c'n make that go a while longer, I calculate.' 'And when will you be leavin' for home?' asks Wallie. 'Not afore Saturday night at dark,

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

anyway,' says Tommie. 'We'll fish the week out, anyway. If we have good luck we'll swing her off Saturday night. If the wind's fair and we have any luck fishin'—Saturday night, but not before,' says Tommie. 'Good-by. Report me to the wife, if you happen to go by the house,' and he waves his hand to Wallie as the Cleopatra goes shootin' by.

"So Saturday night he must've sailed and here it's only Tuesday morning. Two days and three nights, and seven hundred and fifty miles, I s'pose we c'n say, he's come. I'll bet there was some draggin' of sail on the Nannie comin' home. Two men to the wheel to hold her, the deck jumpin', if I know Tommie, and life-lines out maybe and himself with his arm hooked into the main riggin' all the way home. Maybe I that's sailed with him don't know."

"The wind must've been fair all the way," hazarded somebody over by the stairs, "when she made such good time."

"Fair enough if it's the same way to the east'ard as it's been here at Cape Ann the last three or four days. Tommie wouldn't want it any fairer than this. It oughter suited Tommie like a fish on every hook—abaft the beam and plenty of it. That's what pleases Tommy, wind anywhere along there—abaft the beam—over the

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

quarter. Man, I mind how pleased he was that time we put into that Norwegian port up to the no'the-'ard just afore we left for home that summer, after Tommie 'd made that long cruise for new halibut-grounds. Went clear up to Spitzbergen afore he stopped that trip. The Lord knows how many thousand miles we sailed the Nannie that trip. I know we got about's far as some of them North Pole hunters ever gets. At eighty north I know we was ketchin' halibut, but the ice chased us south again. The Nannie O warn't no polar-boat, you see, full of solid beams inside and with grub for about four hundred men and dogs for four hundred year, and so Tommie flew before the ice, and that's the time he put into this Norwegian port. What was the name of it now?—ha? Christiansund? No, not Christiansund—I mind Christiansund, where you shoot in the harbor at one end and out the other. 'Twas away farther north than that. Stamsund? No, I mind that, too. No, not Ellingsund, but some name like that. Anyway, up that way it was—some sund port up there to the no'the-'ard. Tommie, you know, was born somewhere up in Norway in one of them sort of bays—fjords they calls 'em—up near them cod-fishing islands, the Lofodens. But he came away from there so early that it didn't leave any bad effects. You

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

know what I mean. There's some able fishermen up there, let me tell you, but they don't have the vessels nor the gear we have. There's where they go out in open boats no bigger than one of our seine-boats—not so big sometimes—with just one square sail in the middle and they can't hug no nearer than six points to the wind, though in their national pride, as you might say, they'll tell you they c'n get within five points and sometimes four points, which is fool-talk on the face of it. For with one square sail in the middle of her and no keel to amount to anything and loose rock in the bottom for ballast, how could they? Anyway, out they go, and in the winter, too, fifty or sixty miles off shore, and of course they sometimes get caught, a lot of 'em, and don't come back. I see by the paper the other day where a hundred of 'em was lost lately in one gale.

“Now Tommie was brought up to that when he was a little boy, and when he comes over this side, why he was just ripe for Gloucester. He learned fast. You c'n just imagine how a big fast able Gloucester schooner would hit a Norwegian boy who'd been having to go out and ketch fish in open boats. Anyway, he warn't fishing out o' Gloucester many years afore he begins to get ideas about things, being a husky, intelligent lad

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

and not scared of anything that ever came out the sea. He got chances with the best skippers out o' Gloucester. He got a lot of ideas about carryin' sail 'specially. One thing he got good and hard into his head was that a real skipper never takes in his mains'l while anybody else in sight's got one standing. And when he did get that into his head—an' you know how the right kind of a boy'll go the limit to be as good as somebody he admires—well when Tommie after fishin' with half a dozen of the craziest sail-carriers out of here, when he'd been with them a while and then gets a vessel of his own, why it got so that men with families used to talk it over on the corner afore they shipped with Tommie. Of course, Tommie had sort of soaked in the atmosphere, as you might say, by that time.

“Well, this time I'm telling about he was in what I call the proper temper to try some sail-carryin'. The few years he'd been skipper up to a while afore this he'd been in old plugs, but, beginnin' to do pretty well, the firm built him the Nannie O, and Tommie cert'nly thought he was fixed then. And he had a right to think he was, for if ever an able vessel sailed past Eastern Point it was the Nannie O in her younger days. And he did love that vessel! Man, but I mind how his eyes used to shine every time he took a

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

look at her. 'Ain't she able-lookin'?' he'd say, and look around to see that everybody else thought so, too. Even now, looking at her coming in the harbor, you don't have to look twice to see she's an able vessel. And if she's able now, think what she must've been afore she was druv to death. She's got iron hoops around her now from chain-plates to chain-plates, fore and aft, to hold her together, and the signs are on her where she spits out her oakum reg'larly. But this time I'm telling you she was only two year old, and able!—able, I'm telling you, able as Tommie himself, and Tommie is able. I've seen him, when I was on the Nannie O, take a buoy-line and throw the bight of it around the main-boom—the best manila line, mind—thick as a clothes-line, I'm telling you shore-people, if there's any here—and pull on that with one finger—the long finger of his right hand—a steady pull, mind, and no trick-work, just a steady pull, and break it. I call that an able man, and that's what Tommie did and c'n do to this day—and he's getting old now, too."

"How old, Peter?" asked one of the kind that must always have the details of things.

"O Lord, I dunno. I mean old for his age. Lord, he's got just as much fire now as ever he had. You just try to cross his bows once and

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

see. But, anyway, he had the fire in him this time. He was the right age, I call it, for a man to like to take chances—in the middle thirties—not too long married, and restless as a cat if he was so much as a week away from home. He cert'nly was restless that trip—kept things jumping! If you'd only seen the way he drove into that port in Norway—a heavy no'therly gale. We threw her into the wind just long enough to pick up the pilot—I remember him just as well—a big lad all oiled up, and I mind how we gaffed him over the rail like a big, broad-backed halibut, with the salt water runnin' off him. He could talk pretty good English, this lad, like a lot of them Norwegian pilots, and he begins to talk as soon's he's found the deck under his feet. First he sings out to take in tops'ls and reef the mains'l. It'd done you good to seen him wave his hands and give orders. 'You will drown,' says he.

"Drown a dog-fish!" says Tommie. "The Nannie O's carried her tops'ls to here, and I cal-late she'll carry 'em a few miles farther."

"But she cannot."

"But she can," says Tommie.

"Then I will not—will not—take the responsibility," says the pilot.

"Then you needn't. Who in the name of creation asked you to?" says Tommie. "All

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

you got to do is to stand by and pick out the buoys, an' bime-by collect your fees, and I'll tend to the handlin' of her."

It was a blowing a livin' gale, mind, in from the no'the-'ard, and Tommie druv her in for this queer-named port with four lowers and two tops'ls like you see him comin' past the whistlin' buoy now if you look out the port-hole. There was one of them tourist steamers we passed on the way—one of them big steamers that'd been up to see the midnight sun, I s'pose, and the passengers was huddled up on deck and watchin' us. I mind how some of 'em pulled out their handkerchiefs and waved 'em at us. Oh, but Tommie liked that!

"We oughter have our flag to the main peak," he says, "to show 'em what she is." He looks aloft to see in his mind how the flag'd look, and the more he looks aloft the more ideas he gets. "Yes, and the balloon and stays'l to her—she'd stand it. I know she'd stand it. She's able for it, I know," he says, and he looks up at her topsticks—they was bending then like two whips and some of us was having a cold chill to think he'd try it. But he shakes his head at last. "Twouldn't be seamanlike, would it? It'd be like putting on airs, bein' so close to port. Wouldn't it, Peter?" he says, turnin' to me, though he

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

didn't gen'rally ask for advice, and I said it cert'nly would.

We was getting into the harbor then, which was the other side of an opening about forty feet wide, where the ends of the two quays didn't quite come together. It was a nice little harbor inside, but crowded this time with all kind of craft, all in from the gale.

"Is there room, do you think, Skipper?" I says when we began to get pretty near.

"Oh, we oughter be able to squeeze in," says Tommie.

"You must not, you must not," says the pilot. He'd been a sort of passenger since we'd got the channel fixed in our minds, but now he was com-in' to life again—assertin' his authority like. "You must not, you must not," he says, speak-in' up to Tommie.

"Hush," says Tommie.

"But I won't take the responsibility," says he.

"I'll take it off you," says Tommie.

"But I'm pilot," says he.

"But I'm skipper," says Tommie.

"But you must not," says he.

"Mustn't hell," says Tommie, gettin' mad.

"Let her swing," he says to me at the wheel.

"Give the Nannie O a full and let her roll!"

And through the passage she went flyin' and the

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

waves from under her bows went up against the quays like she was an ocean-liner hooked up.

And when she got in! On the deck of every vessel in the harbor they crowded to see who was the strange schooner comin' in carryin' her tops'ls when everything under sail that day had come in with what they had in the way of lower sails reefed down. Tommie went to the wheel himself and, man, you ought've seen him shoot her! Up she came, and whing! My soul, I thought she'd go another quarter-mile the way he slammed her into the wind! And she would have, only just in time he sings out and cl-i-i-nk! over goes the anchor, and whr-r-r—down comes jibs and fores'l, and there we was all standin'. Our mains'l was shakin' in the wind wild as could be and the reef-points on it crackin' like a hundred whips, but there we was sure enough right in the middle of them all, with their eyes poppin' out at us. "Break out her flag to the main peak and let em' know what country this one's from," says Tommie. And we flies our big, new ensign, and in a second, from half a dozen steamers 'round us and four or five steam-yachts—if there was one I'll bet there was a hundred people, men and women, flashed out little American flags on sticks and waves 'em up and down like crazy people. Warn't we surprised though?

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

Lord, the care they take when they do! And at home, if it looks bad, they're forever runnin' to a harbor. Now," says Tommie, "imagine what they'd say of a fisherman in Gloucester if he was to up anchor and come home every time he saw a breeze making. S'pose he could get in every time, though of course he couldn't, for he'd be caught away offshore, two or three or four hundred miles or more sometimes. But s'pose he did spend his time dodgin' gales? He'd do a lot of fishin', wouldn't he? And he'd get a lot of men to ship with him, wouldn't he? So our vessels must be built strong. And in an ocean race now"—Tommie shook his head, sad-like, to think what Gloucester fishermen misses for not gettin' chances in ocean races.

"Do you mean to say that you would race your vessel against the Valkyrie—say across the ocean?" asks the yachting sharp, after studyin' Tommie awhile.

"Race the Nannie against the Valkyrie across the ocean?" Tommie looks at the steam-yacht lad like he was somethin' queer came up in the trawls. "Why, if I thought the Nannie O couldn't beat any blessed yacht of her length afloat across the Western Ocean, I'd sell her for a wood-carrier to some Nova Scotia trader—on my life I would. Race her against the Valkyrie

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

across the ocean? Why 'twould be a sin and a shame—why, don't you know these cup-challengers goes over under storm-sail and we've got everything in God's world to put on the Nannie?"

"But if it is light weather, wouldn't she have sail enough to creep along as fast as a fisherman and——"

"Would she creep along?" says Tommie. "And do you callate the Nannie can't waltz along in moderate weather, a nine or ten knot breeze now—what?"

"And if it comes heavy weather," goes on the yachting chap, to finish up his argument, "she'll have sail enough, anyway."

Tommie brought his fist down on the table at that, the dishes rattlin' against each other like ten-pins. "The Lord forgive you, but can you, a man that knows enough about the sea to be runnin' a big steam-yacht like this—can you imagine a breeze when I'd be keepin' only storm-sail on the Nannie if I was racin' her. This vessel of mine is a Gloucester fisherman that was built to go halibutin'—to go halibutin', man. Look here, now, when does this Valkyrie leave for America?" Tommie was ready to explode.

"Oh, but you couldn't start with her on even terms," says the yachting lad, "because she's due

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

to leave England to-day. That's what put me in mind of her. She's to leave Plymouth to-day, and that's a thousand, yes twelve hundred miles, nearer America than this place is."

"To-day?" says Tommie. "That's too early. I want to go ashore and send a letter or two home—maybe telegraph the owners. But to-morrow, yes—we'll sail to-morrow. We're bound home, anyway. We only put in here to get grub and ice and water and send letters home. What time to-day will this yacht sail?"

"I don't know exactly. Along in the middle of the day sometime."

"Well, let's average it up and call it twelve o'clock," says Tommie. "Now, to-morrow at noon I swings the Nannie O off for Gloucester. I'll give that Valkyrie her ten or twelve hundred mile start, and if I don't beat her across the Western Ocean—ten or twelve hundred mile and all—then you c'n call my vessel any kind of a name you want. Put the Nannie's whole sail to her storm-sail to offset the thousand-mile start. We'll sail the Nannie to Gloucester and they'll sail the Valkyrie to New York. Gloucester may be a couple of hundred mile nearer than New York. But she'll have a thousand miles on us then—which don't matter. Good-by," says Tommie. "I'm goin' aboard to see what the

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

cook's got for the passage, but to-morrow at twelve you give us your whistle and we'll up jibs and off for Gloucester—and bime-by we'll see."

"If you beat her," says the millionaire, "I'll give you something handsome for the sport of it."

"Never mind the something handsome," says Tommie. "But I'll reach the other side afore that bloody English yacht, or sink the Nannie O."

"Hooray!" says the steam-yacht lad, "and here's to"—he fills the glasses all around—"What will we drink to now? Come now, Captain, a toast—what'll we drink to?"

"Plenty wind," says Tommie.

And we got plenty wind. We never waited till next day. We goes aboard, Tommie gets a letter from the cook, reads it two or three times, jumps on deck all at once, says, "Break her out," and we turned to. It was blowin' then worse than when we came in. The steam-yacht lad was there on the bridge in his rain-coat. "I say, Captain, but you're not going to start to-day?" he hollers out to Tommie.

"Why not—ain't this the day?" Tommie hollers back. We were heaving on the anchor then, and Tommie looks around. We all looks around. We thought maybe that word had come that the Valkyrie'd been delayed.

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

"Think of the risk, the needless risk," says the yachting sharp.

"Risk?" says Tommie, "risk with the Nannie O? The Lord forgive you, you don't know her."

She was beginning to pay off then, with Tommie at the wheel, and the millionaire lad walking aft to keep up the talk. He sings out, "Can I cable any message to the other side for you—to the owners, say, to let them know you are coming?"

"The owners—no," says Tommie. "But hold on—I nigh forgot—you might telegraph my wife and tell her I'm on the way home."

"All right. What'll I say?"

"Just say," says Tommie, "'Comin' home,' and sign it 'Tommie.' Just 'Comin' home, Tommie,'—just like that. And send it to Mrs. Captain Tommie Ohlsen, Gloucester."

"Nothing more, Captain?"

"Nothing more," says Tommie.

"But won't I say you're going to hurry? Maybe she'd like to know you're hurrying."

"Good Lord!" says Tommie. "She'll know that without writing it down," and he puts the wheel down and swings the Nannie off, and bangs her out the harbor.

So out we goes and from then on we had it.

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

None of you here have been through it—that I know—one of them crazy drivers of skippers making a passage. Some of you, maybe, have heard how they come from the Banks that way, six or eight hundred or a thousand miles, nothin' but a high sea to the lee quarter and a roarin' wake all the way. Well, cert'nly we had it across the Western Ocean that time—four thousand miles, or forty-two hundred I think they said it was from that Norwegian port to Gloucester. Well, we had it—four thousand and odd mile of sea rushin' by, with two men lashed to the wheel, life-lines out, and hatches battened most of the time, everybody on deck hangin' on to something, the lee rail buried gen'rally and once in a while her sheer-poles going under. Day in and day out we had it, the wind singin' through her rigging, boom-jaws creaking, the planks in her deck quiverin', and her mast-heads strainin'. Four thousand and odd mile o' that—it was enough to drive a man crazy. There was some of the gang took to their bunks that passage just to get away from the strain of it—hailed the blankets over their heads so's they wouldn't have to listen to the everlastin' singin' up on deck. Yes sir, from her trucks to her keel she was groanin'. But Tommie!—Lord, he enjoyed every foot of that passage. He'd stand on the

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

quarter over by the main rigging, or maybe sometimes aft by the corner of the house for a change. He'd be lookin' for'ard the length of her or over the rail and then up. "Lord," he'd say, "but ain't she able, the Nannie! And ain't she beautiful?—she's cert'nly an able dog, this one!" And he'd shake his head and smile at whoever was to the wheel, and if whoever was to the wheel didn't say she was beautiful and able—if he didn't speak right up and say she was the ablest vessel he ever stood on—and the most beautiful—if he didn't speak right up, he'd get nothing but black looks from Tommie for the rest of his watch, for Tommie cert'nly loved the Nannie. All he studied that passage was how to keep more sail on her—he did most of his sleeping in the daytime so he could watch her better at night. "It's at night a fisherman gains," he'd say. "Any vessel at all c'n sail in the daytime, but it takes a fisherman to do her best sailin' at night." And of course that's so. Everybody knows if you leave sail on your vessel all night she'll make great gains afore mornin'—that is, if the other fellow is careful and takes some of his off. The way the Nannie'd come along in the dark—ten, eleven, and twelve knots—it warn't nothin'. Thirteen, fourteen—yes, and fifteen knots it was sometimes. The Nannie just eat 'em up,

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

and Tommie walking the deck all night keepin' the sail to her and watchin' her. Whenever he was ready to turn in—he slept about three hours in twenty-four all the way across—the last thing he'd say afore his head went down the cabin steps'd be, "Keep the sail on her and call me if it moderates." Most skippers I sailed with used to say afore they turned in to call 'em if it breezed up, but Tommie used to say to call him if it moderated. Though we wouldn't need to call him even then. If ever she stopped her leapin' for two minutes he could feel the change in his sleep. Her gettin' back on a more even keel used to roll him away from the lee corner of his bunk, I s'pose, and in another minute he'd be on deck.

There was an ungodly big stays'l Tommie was forever wantin' to see on the Nannie, and I mind we must've been half-way across one day, when he took it into his head that the Nannie'd look perfectly beautiful with that stays'l up there between the topm'sts. That was the day he put her under the nose of the big liner. Wait till I tell you about the liner. "Here's one of them English liners comin', and I know they'll be watching us," Tommie said when he first sighted her, "and we might's well show 'em how an American vessel c'n sail." So up goes the stays'l.

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

From her trucks half-way to the deck it came, and it about filled all the space fore and aft between the masts. The whole crew had to bear on the after sheet to get it flat enough to suit Tommie, and then, when we couldn't do any more with it by straight fore-and-aft haulin', he has us run a piece of line up and down from a ring bolt under her rail to across the sheet, and we all swayed on that again. You wouldn't think a man in mid-ocean would bother with the fine points o' sailin', especially when there was plenty wind as it was. But Tommie did, and you'd better believe that sheet was some flat when we got through with it. Tommie looks for'ard—the Nannie was most buryin' herself afore he put the stays'l on her at all,—but with the stays'l on her, why, she was sailin' pretty much on her side. "My soul, Skipper!" says Albert Frazer to the wheel with me—both of us fast to the wheel, me to the wind'ard and with a line to the starboard bitt, and him to looard with a line to the port bitt—"My soul, Skipper! if that don't take the spars out of her it'll cert'nly throw her down," says Albert. "Hush, boy," says Tommie, "hush, boy—not the Nannie." And he looks aloft. "But she do look beau-ti-ful with that stays'l, don't she?" And he looks aloft again, and then ahead to the liner. "And here's the

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

liner comin'. I'll bet they're sayin' aboard her now, 'By the Lord, but there's an able vessel!' and pointing their glasses at us, I'll bet, and wonderin' who we are." He'd hardly got that out, standin' back by the corner of the house just the other side of me, when qu-r-r—and the Nannie shivered. Qu-r-r—it came again and she takes a lurch, and over on her side she went. The three of us aft, the Skipper, Albert, and myself, was taken off our feet. Me and Albert being lashed, was all right—we stayed aboard. I was slammed over the wheel-box, and Albert into the lee scuppers, but the Skipper, not bein' lashed to anything, he goes over the rail. I didn't see him goin', bein' almost drowned myself, but when I looked up he was gone. I hollers, and in a second Albert hollers back. "All right," he says, and there he was with just a hold of the Skipper's wrist, and the Skipper ahold of the rail, but bein' dragged under the Nannie's overhang. 'Twas nothing but his awful grip saved him. The fingers of one hand hung onto the rail all the time. That awful strength in them wrists and fingers of his saved him. Did I tell you how he could part a buoy-line pulling by one finger? Yes? Well, he climbs aboard. "By the Lord," says he, "but there's the devil's own suction under that overhang." And that's all the

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

thought he gives it. We was worryin' then about the Nannie—afraid she was goin' to roll clean over, and stay over maybe—but no. Just as the Skipper climbs back over the rail she stops rollin' down, and the Skipper, grabbin' the wheel quick, she begins to come up fine. She was all right again in about two minutes, but her rails was hardly beginnin' to show signs of raisin' again afore the Skipper begins to talk again. "Quite a squall that, Skipper," I says. "Squall? 'Twasn't a squall did that, Peter. An unlucky sea, an unlucky sea, Peter." He wouldn't give in, d'y'see, that them sails was too much for the Nannie. "If 'twas any other vessel," he goes on, "she'd been hove down altogether. Shoot her under the bow of that liner—give her a full now!" he says, "and let's see what she'll do. Let her swing now!" he says, "and let's see what she'll do. By the Lord, but she's an able dog—any other vessel and her spars'd been floating out on the water now—maybe her keel up. Yes, sir, any other vessel. Do you and Albert let her have it now, Peter."

Well, we let her have it again, and Lord! but the wind roared into her. Wh-sh—it went, and wh-sh-sh—it went—and then wh-sh-sh and wh-r-r-up it went all at once, and away went that ungodly stays'l. "Thank the Lord!"

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

says Albert. "Amen," says I—but behind the Skipper's back both of us, you better b'lieve. The Skipper looks up after the stays'l floatin' half way up to the sky and eyes it sad-like. "By the Lord," he says, "but the firm ought to change their sail-maker. Ain't it a shame?" he says, "and we were goin' along so fine, too—and strangers lookin' at her." And turning to us at the wheel, "Well, we got to make the best of it, I s'pose; watch this fellow ahead now, and when I sing out, put the wheel up and shoot the Nannie under her nose." And under the very nose of her we sent the Nannie flyin'. Not much closer could we get without us or her gettin' in trouble—most likely us.

They crowds for'ard on the liner to get a look at us. I know we must've been a sight for what few passengers was peekin' down on us over the rail. Albert and me to the wheel was buried to our waists, and the skipper hangin' on to the main riggin'—on the lee riggin' so's to be nearer the liner—standin' to his knees in the wash comin' over the rail. On the bridge of the liner one of the officers holds up a megaphone and points it down on Tommie. "Lucky for you that sail blew out, Captain," he hollers. "Lucky hell," hollers back Tommie—Tommie didn't need any megaphone. "That stays'l

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

never blew out. 'Twas the halyards slipped and we turned it loose. That stays'l!—Good Lord! this one'd carry four stays'ls if there was spars enough to hang em' on to." And you oughter seen the lads on the bridge poke their eyes at him. "Yes," says Tommie, lookin' back—we was leapin' past her quarter then—"yes," says Tommie, "look at us. Look, you fish-eyed son of a rock-lobster, look. You're 600 and odd feet long, and eight times 'round your house is a mile, and you think you're the only thing that sails the sea. Three stacks and two screws, and you're thinkin' you could take us aboard and not so much as crowd the saloon-passengers on the promenade-deck. And so you could, and your bridge is as high as our mast-head, but by the Lord! the Nannie don't need any steam-gear to get her home, and she'll carry her four lowers when you're rollin' funnels under." And he shook his fist back at the liner. "Lucky we lost our stays'l, is it?" And for an hour afterward you could hear him sputterin', "Lucky for the Nannie the stays'l blew out, was it? Lucky for this one, was it?" The sparks kept comin' out of him for an hour after the lad on the bridge of the liner had spoke his piece about the Nannie and her stays'l.

And that's the way we came drivin' across the

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

Western Ocean that passage. Never less than four lowers, no matter how it blowed, but more gen'rally with both tops'ls and sometimes with the big balloon. The skipper, he'd be standin' on the quarter or aft, as I said, with one eye aloft like a gimlet all the time, to see how the Nannie's spars was standin' it. The other eye'd be ahead watchin' for I don't know what, unless it was a sight of the Valkyrie, though if ever he really expected to get a sight of her I can't say, for once we was clear of that Norwegian port, from one end of the passage to the other, I never heard him say one word about her. There was something else on his mind, I don't know what. All it was 'd be a look to the chart every noon after he'd take a sight—that's whenever the sun'd be out, which it warn't more'n half the time—a look at the log and the compass to check up, and then, "So many days out and we're so far. A fair average now, and we'll be home in so many days"—him figuring it up on the slate that he'd bring up out the cabin and lay on top the house, when it warn't too wet outside.

When he started out he didn't expect to make the passage in less than three weeks. I heard him say that myself. He never looked at that time of the year for a better chance than that. And three weeks is good sailin', let me tell you,

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

for that distance with everyday luck in the way o' wind. If it had been in winter now he'd nach'rally count on plenty o' wind all the way over, but it was too much luck to expect it this time. But we did get it, and the Nannie kept a-goin', and the average kept a-raisin.' When we started out I remembered he said 200 miles a day wouldn't be bad, but toward the end of it, seein' himself goin' along so fine, he begins to get nervous. "This fine breeze'll die out," he began to say when we was beginnin' to near this side, "this fine breeze'll die out and maybe we won't make such a fine passage after all."

He comes up on deck one day with a book of all kinds of sporting-records along with his sextant, and says, "Ever since my first trip on the Nannie O, and I found she was a devil to sail, it's been deep in my heart to break all the best of those Atlantic records if ever I got a chance, and now I've got a chance—and a reason. Yes, by the Lord, a reason." None of us knew what he meant by a reason, unless it was beatin' the Valkyrie, which he seemed to've forgotten all about, or beatin' the clipper-ship record, which he'd only seemed to just bring up. However, he goes on to read from the sporting-almanac. "From New York to Queenstown the sailin'-record for yachts is twelve days and nine hours.

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

How much would that be from Norway to Gloucester? Figure it out some of you." So we brings the chart up on deck and spreads it out on the house, a man to each corner to hold it down, and logged it off with a pair of dividers. "Call it 2,850 miles from New York to Queens-town," we says, "and 4,200 miles from Norway to Gloucester. That'd be over eighteen days for our passage," we says.

"If this breeze holds out I'm sure we'll beat that," says Tommie, "but here's a better one," and he reads out of the book of records again. "Here's a dog of a record. Here's a sailin'-record—an old clipper-ship record I callate that must be—from Liverpool to Boston—the western passage—twelve days and six hours. That's sailin' for you, that's sailin'. Some of those old clippers were dogs, warn't they? They cert'nly was. Now twelve days and six hours from Liverpool to Boston—chart the distance—that'll be how long for our passage?" We figures it out on the slate and tells him—seventeen days as near as we could figure it. "Seventeen days is it?" he says. "By the Lord, we'll beat that a day and that'll be sailin'—sixteen days. Let's see now. We're fourteen days to here this noon. Call it noon, anyway—only a few minutes now to twelve o'clock. I'll take a sight and see where

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

we are. And d'y' know, but I wouldn't be surprised, but if this breeze hold's out, we'll give that clipper-ship record a good beatin'?"

"But, Skipper, she was a 1,500-ton square-rigger," speaks up somebody; "a big brute of a square-rigger."

"What's the odds if she was 15,000-ton, and rigged triangular, so long's we beat her?" says Tommie.

"In this little one—a 120-ton?" says the growlin' lad again.

"Yes, in this little one, if she was but twenty ton without the hundred, what difference does it make so she sails, and let me tell you she ain't too little to dare," says Tommie, beginnin' to get mad, and nobody said any more about that.

He takes a sight, and finds that we was in 44.30 latitude and 56 longitude then. That put us half way between the Grand Banks and Quero, somewheres to the southerly edge of Saint Peer Bank—and our soundings showed it, too. About 650 miles—that's sea miles—from home then, and fourteen days out.

"Six hundred and fifty miles and forty-eight hours to go. She'll make it," says Tommie, "the Nannie'll make it. Let this breeze hold out and we'll make her make it. All hands come aft now and listen to me. Split yourselves

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

into two gangs and stand by from now on to trim sheets night and day. No more card-play-in' for'ard, no more poker, nor forty-fives, nor whist, nor no more takin' it easy in your bunks when you're not on watch. From this out no more sleep for any body aboard this one—not until we get into Gloucester. And if there's anybody ain't in oilskins he'd better get into them, for it's wet decks and everybody standin' by from now on. No more sail comes down unless it blows down. There's your orders if I'm not on deck any time," he says, and looks around to make sure everybody heard him. "Sway up," he says, and we begins to sway up. Everybody heaves away on the halyards, and when we couldn't pull in another inch, when everything was flat as boards, he goes around deck and takes an extra half-hitch to every halyard. "Now they won't slip," he says, and there was the devil in his eye.

That night in a thick o' fog we ran by Sable Island. We must've gone pretty close to the no'the-east bar because one time we found ourselves in twenty fathom of water. That sound-in' worried some of us, but not the Skipper. "Will we hold her up," we says. "Blessed Lord, no," he says, "keep her goin'. Straight courses makes short passages. If we go seesaw-

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

ing all over the ocean, there's no telling' when we'll get home. Twenty fathom," he says. "And we drawin' only fifteen feet three or four. Keep her goin'." And we kept her goin', listening for the surf because we knew we'd never see the light in that fog. Straight to the west'ard we druv her, and some time afore mornin' it must've been we went by the no'the-west bar, because at daybreak we could make out a surf under our lee quarter, and that couldn't be anything but the no'the-west bar.

From there—the no'the-west bar—we got the fairest kind of a slant. "Wing her out for Cape Sable," says Tommie. And we wung her out, and down the Cape shore she flew, with the ten dories in her waist as good's a stuns'l to her. It came thick o' fog again and all the way along the Nannie was goin' it blind. Drivin' by the no'therly edge of La Have we thought we might fall foul o' somebody, but not a smell of a sail did we get till we almost ran into a three-masted schooner layin' to anchor just to the east'ard of Cape Sable. Layin' to an anchor she was, mind you, and we swingin' both tops'ls. We was comin' along, all foam and smoke then, and couldn't see the length of the vessel, when all at once we heard voices and then almost under our bowsprit was this big three-master. We whipped

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

the Nannie clear just in time to save her—or maybe to save both of us, I don't know how. I only know we was close enough to brush her paint as we went wingin' by—and then we heard the voice sayin'—you know, some of you, how you c'n hear a voice sometimes in the fog when you can't see anybody—the voice said, "I'll be dinged if I didn't just thought I saw a little two-masted schooner goin' by with everything on."

"Everything on?" said another voice—"in this breeze?" and we could hear him laugh—"saw a ghost, I guess."

"Tommie was listening to it. "A ghost?" he says. "By the Lord, if this one'd go into you, head on, you wouldn't think it was any ghost—if ever she hit you, head on. A ghost? Huh, if that ain't a coasterman all over. 'Cause they can't carry sail themselves they don't think anybody else can. Have an ear out for the whistle now, boys, for we're pretty close in-shore, I think."

It was the Cape Sable whistling-buoy he meant, but we didn't have to listen for the whistle because the fog lifted not long after we passed the coaster to an anchor, and the light-house itself stood out clear enough. At five o'clock, or maybe a little later in the afternoon, we came tearin' up abreast of it and then we straightened her out for home. "The home-leg,

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

boys," says Tommie, "west, half no'the, and drive her—drive her, drive—by the Lord, DRIVE HER!" He snaps his big arm across his body like he was tryin' to snap a whip. Man, man, but she went along! That was a run that one, from Cape Sable to Gloucester on the Nannie that time. Two hundred and twenty-five mile, sea-mile of course, they call it, and the Nannie made it in something over fourteen hours. 'Twas nothin' but the air full o' mist from the foam under her rail. Man, but she did lay down to it. She fair smoked. "The Nannie always could sail on her side," said Tommie, watchin' her—"always could." There was a big coaster runnin' out from the Bay of Fundy just afore dark. She was under two jibs and reefed fores'l—just wallerin' she was. "What you doin' out in a day like this?" hollers Tommie. The nearer Tommie was gettin' to home the more playful he was gettin'. They looks over the rail at us again and one of 'em hollers as we went swingin' by. "Go it, you crazy Gloucester fishermen. Keep on and you'll find bottom some day," but Tommie only laughed at him. That was just afore dark.

Early in the morning, when we could almost smell Cape Ann, we overhauled a tramp-steamer. She was pluggin' along about nine or ten knots an hour, I should say. There was a grouchy-lookin',

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

bushy-whiskered fellow on her bridge, duckin' his head to the breeze and the rain. We went by him like he was goin' the other way. "Any message?" says Tommie, and he leaned back interested-like to get the answer. "Any message?" says Tommie—"we're goin' home."

"Goin' to hell, more likely," says the fellow on the bridge.

"Not in the Nannie O," laughs Tommie, "but if we was we'd report you comin'," and he laughs again.

He was all jokes on that home-stretch, but it was desp'rate, just the same, the way he druv her. "We'll make it, we'll make it—sixteen days," he kept sayin' all the way along. He'd never so much as winked an eye, mind you, from the time he first took the extra half-hitches the other side of Quero, and he was watchin' out now like two men. He was the first man to raise the lights on Thatcher's. There was two others to the mast-head with him, but the others said afterward that he made out the lights ten minutes afore they did, and, leanin' against the back-stay, he looked his fill. For five minutes he didn't look away, and, comin' slidin' down to deck, he said, "We're most home, most home," he said; that was all, but oh, his eyes, and the way he said it!

The rocks of old Cape Ann hove in sight, and

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

then, rounding Eastern Point, Tommie took the wheel himself. "We'll surprise 'em," he says, and druv her into the harbor as if she had another 4,000 miles to go and not a minute to lose. It was whing—bang—past the whistling-buoy, a leg across and a leg back. Even in the inner harbor the way he held her nose to it was a scandal. "Might's well keep her goin'," he says, and he lashes her like a race-horse clear up to her berth off the owner's dock—the same berth you c'n see him to now if you look. But the way he came in just now ain't nothin' to it. Whing—bang—it was—in with tops'ls, down with jibs, let go anchor, down with fores'l, let the mains'l stand—"And there she is," says Tommie, "the able Nannie O, with the fastest 4,000 and a couple o' hundred mile ever charged to a vessel across the Western Ocean. What time by the Gloucester clock for'ard?" The clock in the fo'c's'le'd been set to Gloucester time and never changed since we left home, and that's what he meant when he asked the time by the Gloucester clock.

"Half-past seven," came the answer.

"Half-past seven—nigh five hours yet to sixteen days—and that's sailin'!"

Man, but his eyes were shinin'. "We'll go ashore now," he says, "and get the news." And

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

we goes ashore. He was for hurryin' off himself, but we asked him to inquire about the Valkyrie—seein' we made such a drive of it we wanted a little satisfaction, and so he inquires, "Any word of that English yacht, that Valkyrie that's comin' over to race for the America's cup," he asks.

Not in yet, they told him, but she'd been reported by one or two Cunarders and some other fast liners. And they tells him how this steamer and that steamer reported her. Accordin' to one of 'em she was hove-to—in longitude so-and-so and latitude so-and-so, they said—I forget now just what.

"What day was that," asks Tommie, and they reckons it up and tells him.

"Hove-to that day!" says Tommie. "Why, man, that Nannie carried both tops'ls that day. What else?"

And they tells him on such-and-such a day she was reported by another steamer in longitude so-and-so and latitude so-and-so, and makin' heavy weather of it.

Tommie reckons that up. "Why," says he, "that must 've been the day afore we blew out that rotten stays'l. That day! why, that day we had the stays'l and balloon both on her. That day! why, that day the gang was playin' draw down for'ard, and I mind some of em'

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

sayin', when we was eatin' dinner, how it was the first day in a week they didn't have to put weights on the silver pieces to keep them from hoppin' off the table. Good Lord!" says Tommie, "but there's none of 'em fit to carry ice for the Nannie—she's cert'nly an able vessel. But I must be gettin' along home," and he goes up the street at a fourteen-knot clip.

That was all well and good. The Valkyrie got in a week later, though Tommie warn't payin' any more attention to her, by that time, than if he'd never heard of her. There was a new baby up to his house, and he was taken up with that. But the millionaire lad, when he heard of it, was tickled to death, they say, and soon's he got over on this side, in the fall, he comes in to Gloucester to see Tommie, and he gave him the finest——

"Peter, Peter," interrupted the one volunteer look-out who had not abandoned his post, "ain't this the Nannie's captain comin' up the dock? Ain't this Tommie Ohlsen himself?" The inquirer's voice was suppressed with excitement.

"Ha?" exclaimed Peter, hopping for the port-hole—"a stout, round man, but not fat—an able-looking man—lemme see. Yes, that's him. That's Tommie himself. Wait a minute till I hail him. Maybe he'll come up, and then

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

you c'n get a good look at an able seaman. And maybe he'll tell us about this last trip—I'll bet he druv her. Hi——" Peter threw back the hatches on the seaward side of Crow's Nest. "Hi-i—Captain Ohl-sen—Good Lord, but what a breeze—he'll never hear me—hi-i—Cap-tain Ohl-sen—"

"Hi——" came back from the man below.

"Hi, Peter—that you?"

"Yes. What kind of a trip did you have?"

"Ha?" called back the voice.

"What—kind—of — a — trip—did — you — have?"

"What?"

"What—kind—of—a—trip—oh, I can't make you hear in this gale. Won't you come up, Captain?" Peter motioned with his arm, the man below waved back, and Peter drew in his head and hauled the hatches to again. "He'll be here now in a minute. Get off the locker two or three of you loafers in case Tommie'd like to sit down for a minute. Maybe he'll stop long enough to tell us about his last passage—he must've come home flyin'. Here he comes. Hear him comin' up the stairs? Climbs to the mast-head like that. Can't you imagine him puttin' his feet down, every step a ratline and a swing from one side to the other. Hush."

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

From below the level of the top step of the flight of stairs leading into the room, he came gradually into view—head, shoulders, body, and legs successively appeared. When he was all up and inside he fitted admirably the picture drawn of him by Peter—round head, round neck, round body, round legs, round all over, but not a pound of fat, eyes deep-set and very blue, jaw salient, skin red-tanned. Master mariner he was, master mariner he looked, and once he stepped within the room the loungers of Crow's Nest paid him that which was their rarest homage—a deferential silence.

In two glances he took in the room. One swept the walls—the charts, glasses, sporting-prints, and models of vessels hung or tacked thereto; the second—a return glance—measured up the crowd.

"I don't see that last T Wharf flyer here; Peter—the one they tell me's been raisin' the devil with the Georges fleet. And some of the old faces gone, too, Peter. Gone to work? Which? No? Lord, Lord, but queer things happens. Well, forty thousand halibut, ten thousand cod, and five thousand or so mixed—haddock, hake, and one thing and another. No, boy, no, keep your seat—I'll be goin' along in a minute. What's new, Peter?"

"Nothing much. Forty thousand halibut, ten

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

thousand—let me put that down afore I forget it. There. What kind of weather'd you have, Captain?"

"Oh, moderate. A beat out most the way, but a fair wind back."

"Must've been fair comin' home, Captain, an' plenty of it. Wallie Manning reported you not goin' to leave till Saturday night, and only Tuesday mornin' now."

"That's right—fair as a man could ask comin' home. Seven hundred and fifty mile to the east'ard when we swung her off an' raised Thatcher's in fifty-nine hours—not bad that now, was it?"

"Lord, but that's great goin', Captain. And they say she ain't in her best trim now, Captain? But she must've come right along?"

"Y'oughter seen her, Peter. Lord, Peter, there's no stoppin' the Nannie once she starts to come. She's a credit to the people that built her—that vessel."

"Blowin' much?"

"Well, not real heavy. She carried both tops'ls all the way."

"Is that so?—thought I saw you comin' in with 'em—swung up both clear past the Point?"

"Till we threw her into the wind and let go our anchor."

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

"But Wallie said he most got hove-down comin' across the Bay of Fundy."

"Did, eh? But what can you expect in a breeze with that one he's got. She c'n drift 'bout's fast as any vessel I know—she ain't half bad in a light breeze—no, I don't callate there's too many of 'em c'n get away with her in one of them palm-leaf zephyrs. But what'd Wallie have to say?—he gen'rally carries home a bit of gossip."

"Oh, nuthin' much, except to report you and two or three others. He says he did ketch the divil comin' across the Bay o' Fundy, though."

"Did he?—comin' across the Bay of Fundy, eh? That'd be—when'd you say he got in? Yesterday noon? That'd be about the night before last when he most got hove down, wouldn't it? Let me see now—where was the Nannie then? Night before last—Sunday—. Comin' across Western Bank we was then—yes. Somewhere's to the south'ard of Sable Island we was. Blowin' hard where he was, did he say? Well, where we was there was just wind enough to wet the Nannie's rail. Well, to be fair, maybe we was takin' a bucket or two on deck now and again. Of course the vessels makes a difference. When the Nannie'd be just dippin' her rail the Cleopatra'd be about hove down, wouldn't she? Yes.

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

But any word of George Hawley, Peter? No? Well, I didn't think there would be. Another good old wagon that one he's got—the Sea-Horse. Where d'y's'pose he ever got the name? It must've been about three o'clock Sunday afternoon that he came wallerin' along bound to the west'ard. He said somethin' about the Nannie an' the Sea-Horse, and I asked him wouldn't he wait and I'd put the dories right out an' haul the trawls. 'I can't leave them ten skates o' gear out there, you know, George—can't you wait a little while?' I says. 'No,' says George, 'this one's got the bit in his teeth'—talks like that on account of the name, I s'pose. 'Got the bit between his teeth,' says George, 'but I'll report you.' 'Will you?' says I. 'You're good-natured as hell, but I callate the Nannie'll do her own reportin' this trip.' 'Yes?' he says—like that—'yes-s?' like that. 'Yes,' I says, 'the Nannie'll report herself this trip, and if there's one vessel the Nannie beats home this passage, that vessel'll be the Sea-Horse.' It was beginning to breeze up then and when we swung off that night it was a fine fresh no'the-easter. The Nannie hopped along pretty lively, and, knowin' the Nannie was comin' along behind, don't y'know, George was sockin' it to the Sea-Horse. He's hobblin' along the road somewhere now, I

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

s'pose, with the bit still between his teeth. Puts her under a reefed tops'l, some of 'em, in a fresh breeze and calls it drivin.' Any word of the Lalla Rookh?"

"Not a word."

"No? I thought it'd be that way. Another good, old chariot, the Lalla Rookh. I s'pose if we had a magic glass an' could get a look, we'd see her rollin' along somewhere between here and Cape Sable. Just afore dark, Saturday night, we made her out 'bout's far to the south'ard's we c'd see—goin' about as straight west as she c'd go with her four lowers—about all she c'd stand up under. Well, I must be goin'. Forty thousand halibut, ten thousand cod, and five thousand mixed, and tell the old man, Peter, to get a place for the Nannie on the railway to-morrow mornin'. I told Wallie about the fore gaff, and I expect he's spoke of that. I wonder did he tell 'em up to the house that I'd be home pretty soon after him—I expect he has."

"I expect he has, Captain. I saw your wife this mornin' when I was coming by the house. She was out in the yard, with a boy to each side of her, and the baby aloft. She said she'd word o' you from Captain Manning, but she'll hardly be expectin' you to-day, will she?"

"Will she? Won't she? You don't know

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

her, Peter. She's always expectin' me if there's any reason. There's a couple of the children fresh-washed and out on the front steps now, I'll bet—out where they c'n see me soon's I turn the corner—a pair of 'em peekin' over the rail, and the littlest fellow inside with his nose flattened against the pane—all keepin' watch. To the mast-head of a seiner they won't be lookin' any harder for mackerel than them children for me, once they hear I'm on the way. And one of 'em has a birthday to-day, Peter. Don't you know I didn't drive the Nannie for nothing this time, Peter. He's just that odd he knows there oughter be somethin' comin' to him on his birthday. He's been askin' his mother, I know, and his mother's been tellin' him whether to expect me home or not. And he'll have the chart out and marked off the Nannie's passage on it, and showing it to the next younger—yes. His mother put 'em up to that. She pitches into me, though, for carryin' sail. 'Tommie,' she'll say, 'Tommie, why do you?' She gets reports from other skipper's wives, d'y' see. 'You must not, Tommie.' She says that, Peter, but good Lord, Peter, you know women. If she thought for a second that I wouldn't pull the spars out the Nannie to get home a night sooner, why she'd—well you know women, Peter. At your age, you know——”

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

"I expect I know as much as the next, Captain, though that ain't too much, but I know more about the other thing—sail-carryin'—Captain. I was only just now tellin' about that passage you made from Norway that time. That was a passage!"

"Warn't it?" The sudden smile made him look a most genial man.

"And you cert'nly did give the Valkyrie the devil that time, Skipper."

"The Valkyrie—the Valkyrie, Peter?"

"Why, yes, the cup-challenger."

"Oh, the yacht! Oh, her. But that warn't no fair race. We was bound to beat her, we carryin' everything and they soakin' along so's not to wrack her for the cup-races. And we not carin' how we get home so long's we got home. Lord, Peter, but I just had to make a passage that time—I just had to. It's tough, I tell you, to think of your wife havin' all the trouble alone—you not there to stand by. 'By the Lord!' I said to myself, 'but here's somethin' to race for. The yacht? I'll lose her!' It was worth sinkin' the Nannie—and the Nannie's a good vessel—just to see her face when I stepped in the room. Yes, sir, she thought I was a thousand miles away, and still a-comin'. And do you mind the christenin', Peter? Warn't it a chris-

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

tenin', though? Tom O'Donnell said it made him think of bein' back in Galway. But I must be goin' Peter. The wife, d'ye' see, will be half-expectin' maybe to see me turn the corner any minute to-day, knowin' I left for home Saturday night, as Wallie told her. And to-day is the little lad's birthday, too—the same little lad that was born the day I got home from Norway. The same lad, and he'll have the chart out and be helpin' the Nannie along." His smile was now a transfiguration. "And that's why I'll have to hurry along. Of course, a man with as many children's I've got now couldn't run home so's to hit every birthday comes along, but when there's a chance—when you're filled up and a little drivin' 'll get you home in time—why, a man might's well carry a bit, mightn't he? 'You oughter be more careful,' the wife says—she says, but Lord, Peter, if she thought for a minute that I'd let any vessel that sails the sea out-carry the Nannie—named after herself, too, and she Irish—d'y' think she'd think half so much of me ever again? No, sir, and I always callate, so long's a spar'll stay in her, the Nannie, to keep her goin', if it's on a home passage. Well, I must be goin'. When I get started, I want to talk all day. Good-by, Peter—report me to the office. Good-by, all," and down the stairs he went.

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

With the disappearance of the sturdy physique, the round legs, round body, round neck, and round head, with the last sight of the wavy hair below the rim of the hat, the entire gang in Crow's Nest relaxed and took full breaths again.

Peter first broke the silence. He took an extra long puff on his pipe, before taking it from his lips to speak. "Did you see the jaws and eyes of him? And now do you b'lieve me when I tell you that no skipper out o' Gloucester ever made him take his mains'l in? I mind now the time, in my fishin' days on the Nannie, when I said to myself, 'Peter, if ever you see home again you're the lucky man. If ever you walk Main Street again you c'n bet somebody's been prayin' for you.' The times I said that, and b'lieved it, yes—b'lieved it like my old mother b'lieves in prayers, and I b'lieved each time till I turned 'round and looked at Tommie. He'd be aft—buried to his waist maybe—but there he'd be and I'd get a good look at him. All I c'd see of his face'd be the eyes and the jaw—his eyes and jaw stickin' out—the jaw like the counter of the Nannie. But that's all a man'd want to see, them eyes and that jaw. Lord almighty! but he's a man to tie your hopes o' Heaven to, is Tommie Ohlsen in a blow. Yes, sir, the sight o' Tommie Ohlsen standin' aft on the Nannie in

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

one of them winter gales—man, man, it's like another anchor."

"I'll bet he's a dog!" came explosively from one of the gang.

"Maybe he ain't! And did you see the walk of him?" was the sympathetic chime of another. "It made me feel seasick just to see him heave himself across the floor, and when he shot his eyes my way, why——"

"Hush, now, and lemme see"—Peter was back to work again—"What was it he said? Wait now—oh, yes, here it is. Forty thousand halibut, ten thousand—ring up, one of you and report that—The Nannie O, Captain Tommie Ohlsen, in from Grand Banks with forty thousand halibut, ten thousand cod, and five thousand mixed fish. Got that? All right—hold on now—don't forget about a place on the railway for the Nannie to-morrow. If they asks what's the matter with her say you don't know. Captain Ohlsen was in such a hurry, say to 'em, that he forgot to say what was the matter with her."

"It will be her oakum, won't it Peter?" queried a well-versed one from the lockers.

"Most likely—some calkin' she needs. It's gen'rally calkin' when she don't want new spars."

"But, Peter, you started to tell us what the millionaire yachtsman gave Tommie when he

Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

came to Gloucester." Among the loungers in Crow's Nest was always one or two who could be depended upon to keep run of the plot of any story. "I heard somebody saying one day down the dock that Captain Ohlsen got a swell barometer and chronometer for some fast passage he made—was that it?"

"It was. And the best money could buy they were, with long inscriptions on the both of 'em."

"And has he got them now?"

"Yes, sir, he has. The glass is hangin' in the cabin of the Nannie to this day, and the chronometer's up in his dinin'-room to home, where the children has it to play with. And he certn'ly——"

"Peter," interrupted the look-out of the moment, "I think there's another vessel coming round the Point, but she ain't carrying any tops'ls like the Nannie O."

Peter hopped up. "Lord, you don't mean to say you sighted a vessel? You're right. Let me see now—where's the glasses? A fresh halibuter, ain't she? Yes—an' by the Lord, it's the Sea-Horse, George Hawley. Said he'd report the Nannie, did he? Lord, Lord, I'd give a dollar if Tommie was here now. And you're right he ain't swingin' no tops'ls. He'll come in—Hawley will—and he'll be some surprised to



Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

see the Nannie in before him. There she is layin' as quiet as if she'd never been as far away as Thatcher's in her life. Goes up on the railway every other trip she does now, the Nannie does, and she's gettin' old, some of them'll tell you—this same George Hawley one of them—but she's a pretty able vessel yet—a pretty able vessel yet—and the skipper that can drive her is Tommie Ohlsen when he wants to make a passage—which he gen'rally does about every time he swings her off for home. Wait till I light my pipe, now ; there"—puff—puff. "He's cert'nly a dog—is Tommie Ohlsen—only some day he won't come home. Just a lee-tle too long he'll hang on some day, and Tommie Ohlsen won't come home any more. No, sir, for all his able seamanship, some day Tommie Ohlsen won't come home any more."

Puff—puff—went Peter, while the others, studying him, began to figure out the kind of a gale it would have to be when Tommie Ohlsen would fail to come home. It would need to be a gale that—indeed yes. But puff—puff—went Peter, and removing his pipe ominously he said it again, softly, looking at the stove and as if to himself, "And some day Tommie Ohlsen won't come home any more." They hearkened to that, even as they hearkened to the gale that still raged

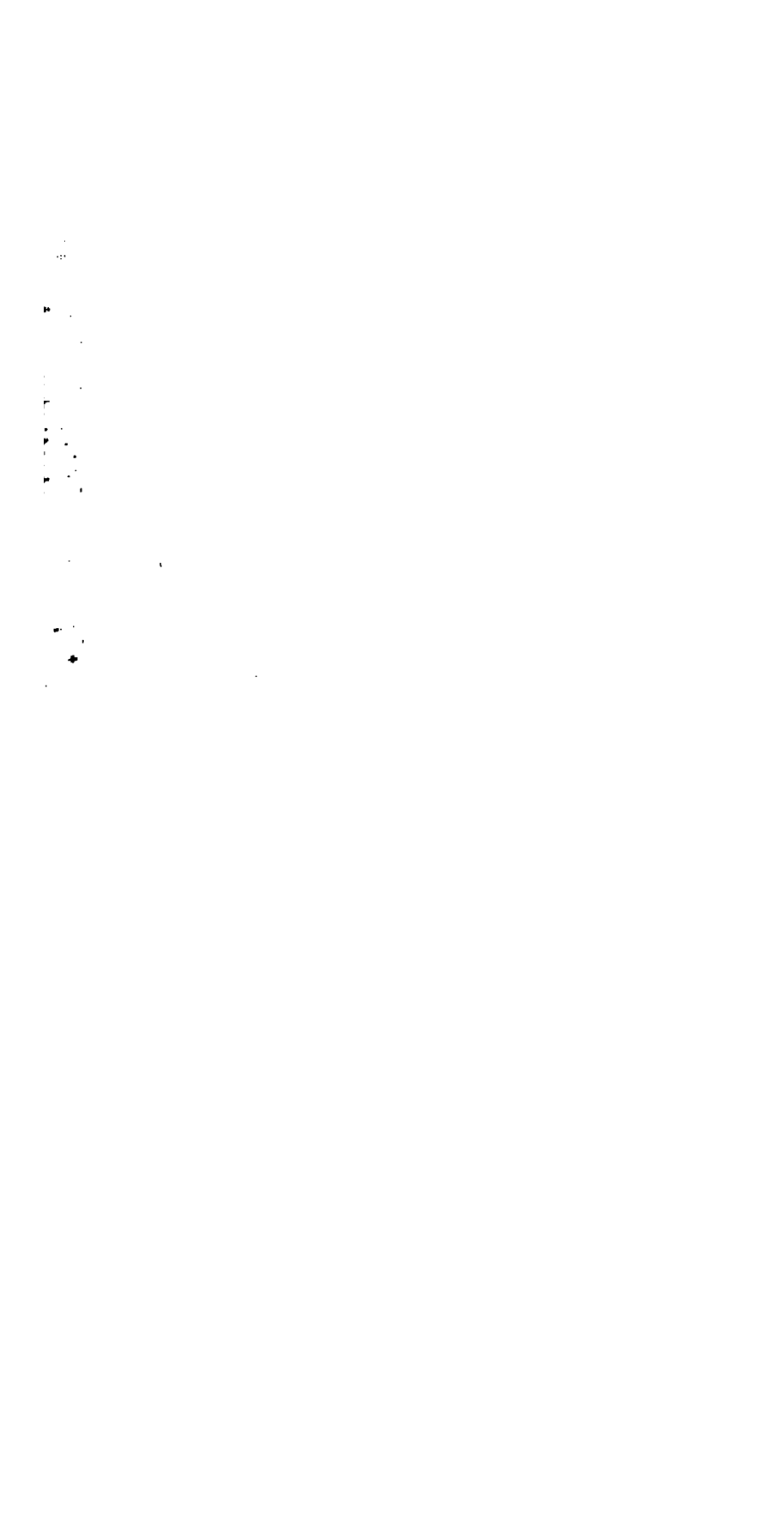
Tommie Ohlsen's Western Passage

outside, and for a time they were quieter than ever. "It would have to be the awful gale that—it cert'nly would." They all agreed to that and were downcast. But hope subdued is a buoyant thing. They had seen the man himself, and "Shucks," said one, "I'd like to see the gale that he couldn't stand off—with an able vessel under him. It never came out the ocean, I don't believe—the gale that would send Tommie Ohlsen to the bottom—not with the Nannie O under him—no, sir,"—and "Shucks" burst out a chorus, "that's right. Not Tommie Ohlsen—why, all Gloucester knew him—Lord yes." And just then the sun streaming through the open port-hole of Crow's Nest added its cheerful suggestion of everlasting hope.



CLANCY







Clancy

I

IN the harbor of St. Pierre, Miquelon, an American fisherman, the Tubal Cain, was lying at anchor, and tramping her quarter was her master, Joshua Bradley, now so indignant that the deck-planks were ringing under his boot-heels. Only a most godly effort of will was holding down the righteous wrath of Captain Joshua, who had just discovered that Clancy was not aboard.

“If ever I ship a drinking man again may the——! Drunk coming out o’ Gloucester—so drunk he like to fell from the mast-head—drunk all the time we was laying over in Halifax—yes, by Jehoshaphat, drunk—and now drunk here—and drunker, I’ll bet, than he ever was to the west’ard, because what with cassy wine and red rum so cheap most anybody’s got money enough to get drunk and stay drunk—Yes, by the hosts of Pharaoh, yes, sir.”

Captain Joshua stamped the quarter and looked wrathfully toward the town. From his New

Clancy

England point of view there was nothing uplifting in the situation. The one man of the crew that knew every harbor on the south coast of Newfoundland, the one man that knew every cove and headland in Placentia Bay, the one man that knew all the native fishermen in all their moods—this one man was now drunk as great Jehoshaphat—yes, sir, drunk as—by the rod o' Moses there warn't no comparisons strong enough. And the worst of it—he was drunk ashore. If he was drunk in his berth now, they could swing her off and go along, and let him come-to on the drive across the gulf. But he was drunk ashore!

Captain Joshua turned to that member of the crew who had earned distinction as being the last man in Clancy's company. "Where'd you say you left him?"

"Oh, up in one of them caffies—one of them caffies with a queer name, up by the square where the blue pump is out in the middle."

"Where the pump is? You don't mean the Caffy Middy?" suggested Captain Josh, but with the air of a cautious man, like one who sought not to get a reputation as being really knowing in regard to such places.

"That's it, Captain—the Caffy Middy."

"And when'd you leave him, did you say?"

"'Bout one this morning."

Clancy

"'Bout one? H-m-m—a good time for you to be comin' aboard. He was drunk then, I s'pose?"

"Oh-h, not real drunk. He could hold his feet all right."

"Could he though? Must've felt proud of himself. Could hold his feet, could he?"

"Yes, because he came across the room where I was talking to one of the waiter girls—the one in the green waist. Maybe you noticed her, Captain, when——"

"Noticed her?" roared Captain Josh. "And how in the name o' the Lost Tribes d'y' s'pose I'd come to notice her?"

"Oh, I didn't know but what you dropped in to rubber 'round—to kind o' keep an eye out for Tommie maybe."

"No, I didn't drop in to kind o' keep an eye on Tommie. D'y' think I got no business ashore but rubberin' into caffies or lookin' out for Tommie? What'd he do then?"

"Oh, he comes over. 'Get out,' he says to me, 'allay—the likes o' you to try and polley-voo to a French lady—the likes o' you!' He was good-natured enough, but he pushes me out the way just the same."

"' Maybe you think she'd like to talk with you with that swelling on your jaw,' says I. He'd a

Clancy

fine big lump on his jaw where I guess some Frenchman—maybe three or four—slammed him. ‘Maybe you think you’re the handsome boy ‘round here?’ I says.

“ ‘ ‘Tain’t handsome boys—’tis winnin’ ways that counts,’ he says. ‘Ness pah, belle mazelle?’ he goes on, and winds up with, ‘Let me whisper in her ear.’ So I left him whisperin’ and came aboard.”

“And when was that, d’y’ say—one o’clock?”

“Oh, one or two, along there.”

“H-m-m—one or two or three or four, I s’pose—any old time so long’s I was turned in. Two o’clock in the mornin’—if it warn’t three or four or five or six—and whisperin’ to a lady—a real lady, of course, being as it was in the Caffy Middy. And he’s whisperin’ yet if I know him. I’ve knowed him to stay whisperin’ for a week once he started in. Maybe some of you could go ashore and get him. Did you say he warn’t real drunk?”

“Well, not what you’d call ossified. His tongue was loose anyway. ‘Bong swor, mazelle,’ he was saying, ‘bong swor. ‘Tain’t like I can’t polley-voo French,’ he says, when I was going away. ‘ ‘Tain’t like I can’t say a word to the lady in her own beautiful language—her belle languajh. This ain’t my first stop ashore in

Clancy

Miquelon—no, nor my twenty-first maybe. Bong swor, mazelle,' he goes on, 'vooz eightay so belle—most belle—vooz.' I followed him along that far because I knew that much French myself."

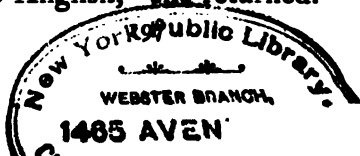
"Huh!" sniffed Captain Joshua, "I don't guess you'd have to follow him so much further for all the French he knows! And if it warn't for them few kegs of red rum we got below, and me dependin' on him to squeeze it through for me, I'd say to the devil with him. I s'pose he'll get to thinkin' soon we can't get along without him, but two of you drop into that dory and waltz up to the Caffy Middy and see what condition he's in—get him aboard if you can. Yes, by Jehoshaphat, he'll get to thinkin' the vessel can't get along without him. Get her under way the rest of you, while the dory's gone. Make sail, main and fore, and then start the chain and we'll up jibs and be ready to go by the time the dory's back."

II

When Tommie Clancy came to himself in the Café du Midi he first sought to discover what day it was.

"Kell ay le joor?" he inquired of the rather elderly woman behind the bar.

"I spik no English," she returned.



Clancy

"What the—Pardong, mazelle. Well, let me think now. O yes, kell ay larjoordwee—Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday—Lundi, Mardi, Mercredi, Jeudi—"

"Oh-h—Mercredi—oui, oui, Mercredi!"

"Wednesday! By the Lord, then Captain Josh has sailed away—sailed away." He lounged toward the nearest window, looked out across the harbor and began, not without melody—

Oh, my captain sailed away
Out o' Massachusetts Bay
In the merry month o' May,
To go a-whalin'.

And my captain says to me
Before he sailed to sea—
"If you get drunk," says he,
"You get a whalin'."

And I says, "O Captain mine"—
My eyes were runnin' brine—
"Your evil thoughts of me
Give me sorrow.
I'm going ashore," says I,
"I'll behave most proper-lie,—
And be with you at the dawnin'
Of the morrow."

But my captain sailed away
Without me o'er the bay—
My captain sailed away
To go a-whalin'.



Clancy

'Bout the time he sailed away
Out o' Massachusetts Bay
They had me in a cell
Awaitin' bailin'.

Oh, my captain sailed away
Out o' _____

"Let him sail!" and with that Tommie suddenly abandoned his warbling, turned, and caught the eye of a rather fleshy and very black-haired man of middle age, who sat at a table, the only other man in the place, and who, as Tommie's gaze met his own, promptly stepped forward and with a beaming smile inquired, "I can help you—perhaps?"

Tommie look him over. "You speak pretty good English, mosseer. Frenchy-voo?"

"Not ex-act-ly."

"Anglish?"

"Not ex-act-ly."

"Not ex-act-ly. Not French, not English, and I know you're no American—the trade-mark ain't on you, but you speak pretty good English for a foreigner."

"I am half French, half English—my father English, my mother French. My name—it is Miller."

"Miller? And I'll bet you're a fox."

Clancy

The stranger smiled. "No, no—no—no fox, as you say."

"No? Well, my name is Clancy."

"I know. And your vessel has sailed yesterday morning. The captain he could not wait. Two men they tried to wake you, but—. You were—well—you—were—"

"Drunk?"

"Oh-h no. Sleepy, I should say."

"Sleepy, the devil! I was drunk."

"Drunk? Well, perhaps so—if you yourself say it—yes. They said—the men—that your captain he did not like it. They said you could come after him when you got sober or go back to Gloucester, as you pleased. He did not like it—you drinking too much cassis wine."

"Did he?—the blessed old deacon. What under the sun ever drove him to fishing, I don't know. Said I could go back to Gloucester, eh? Well, maybe I will. Wait, now—when does the steamer leave for Halifax?"

"There is one in two days."

"Then I'll take it—if I've got enough money. Wait, now, till I see."

Tommie overhauled his pockets. He gathered from his trousers, his vest, and the little finger pocket in his coat, a loose collection of French, English, and American coins. "Wait now." He



Clancy

sorted them out on the bar, and began to figure. "Let me see now. Coppers don't count, do they? Here's two American quarters and here's a queer French piece, and three Newfoundland quarters—though where they come from I don't know—and here's some dimes, and— Wait, now, till I figure it up. Seventy-five and seventy-five and twenty-five makes one seventy-five. And ten French and three tens Newfoundland and three tens American and this queer piece—that don't go, I suppose—but here's a French franc—twenty? That's two sixty-five, ain't it? By the Lord, but I'm flush. Two sixty-five. And how much to Halifax by the cheapest ticket? If ever I get to Halifax— How much, now, from here to Halifax?"

"To Halifax? About five dollairs—third class."

"Five dollars? Wait now. There's two fifty. That'll get me half way. That won't do, will it? No half-way stations at sea, is there? No. Wait now. Two fifty. See here, Mister Miller. You're a sporting gent, I know. I can see that by the look of you. Sporting blood is just running around as loose as can be inside of you, I'll bet. I'll cut cards with you for this two fifty. There's a pack on that table there."

"Very well, sair."

Clancy

They cut. Tommie turned a queen and the stranger a four.

"You win, Mistair Clancy. I will try you again. Do you say, Yes? For the five dollairs? Very well, sair. One two-spot—oh, oh, one two-spot. And you, Mistair Clancy?"

"Me?" Tommie flipped it up. "One ten-spot, Mister Miller."

"You are lucky, Mistair Clancy. Shall we say again? Twenty dollairs you will then have, if you win."

"Twenty dollars, eh? That's right—if I win. I don't like the way you said it, Mistair Miller, but here's a go. And if I win, Mistair Miller, I stop card-cutting right here and I go by first cabin to Halifax. I want to warn you so you won't feel put out. Here you are. A king!—there's a hot one for you, a king!"

"And I—a king also!"

"Follow your hand, old man. Now what!—an ace? Good Lord, what am I up against? Wait now. Watch the professair. Wait now—watch—a deuce! Blessed Lord, think of that—a measly little two-spot—and after the king! If I was only half-way in it, but a deuce against an ace! Wait now. Here's this dime and nickel—fifteen cents. Come now, give me a run for the fifteen cents. Come now, where's your An-



Clancy

glo-Franco sporting blood? Give me a run for the fifteen, Mister Miller. Come now."

"As you say, Mistair Clancy, but I do not like that—to take your last cent. I would not be like what you call a sporting gent." Mr. Miller smiled like an honest fellow.

"Well, maybe you're right. It looks like renegeing, too, after sayin' I was going to quit if I won that last one. But the fifteen ain't any use to me, so let's have a drink with it. Come now, and if the mazelle behind the bar'll let us have two drinks for it, we'll have a little touch."

"With pleasure, Mistair Clancy. You are what you call in your country—gam'—gam'—game! Ah, that is it—you are game! It is in your eye."

"In my eye?—h-m—like that twenty I thought I had when I saw the king. No, you're not a fox—oh no. Drink up and let's have another little touch. Oh, I forgot—I'm broke. If I was in Halifax now—I know a party in Halifax—but maybe you can tell me how I'm going to get a passage to Placentia Bay."

"I think I know. And have a leet-le—ha—tush with me. That is a new word for me—a leet-le tush. Have a tush with me, Mistair Clancy."

"I don't mind. And you think you can land

Clancy

me in Placentia pretty soon? Well, you do and you're all right. Here's a shoot."

"And me—a shoot also." Mr. Miller touched his lips to the glass. "And now let us go to that table in the corner and I will tell you. But perhaps we may need some wine while we talk. Antoinette—O, Antoinette." He motioned to the woman behind the bar, and she brought over a bottle and two glasses.

They poured out another drink. Miller bowed and just touched his glass. Tommie nodded and drained his to the bottom. He smacked his lips, fingered the bottle, studied the label, said, "Ah, cassy, ain't it?" with much satisfaction, set the bottle down regretfully, looked resolutely over to his new acquaintance, and said, "Drive her."

"I have in the harbor," began Miller, "a fine vessel, a fine vessel. She was one time of Gloucester, one of your fishermen. She is a very good schooner and you will like her, I know."

"I will like her—is that so?"

"Wait. One time here in Saint Pierre we did a very good business in Newfoundland herring. Every spring our sheeps—our schooners—come over from France and go over to bait in Newfoundland—in Fortune Bay, in Placentia Bay, at Saint John's, and so on. You understand?"

"So far, yes. But what is it all about?"



Clancy

“One mo-ment. Our fishermen—but first, let us have ano-thair leetle tush, as you say. Come now, as you also say, Mistair Clancy. Come now. It is good wine—of the best, is it not?”

“Of the swellest. And I don’t know but I will. Have a touch yourself?”

“No, no, but drink you—you, who are my friend. You honor me.”

“That so? Well, stick to me, old man, and you’ll die in honor. Here’s a shoot.”

“Thank you. Well, our French fishermen can no more come over to the Newfoundland coast and get bait without—without we get pair-mit, and pairmit costs a dollair and a half the ton. A dollair and a half the ton our sheeps must pay. You know that, Mistair Clancy? Very well. I have, I myself, four sheeps which fish on the banks. Well, there is twelve hundred tons at a dollair and a half the ton. I have also four more sheeps of Bordeaux in the old country which look to me. Their captains come to me every year for bait. There is twelve hundred tons more. Twelve and twelve, that is twenty-four hundred tons at a dollair and a half the ton. How much must I pay, Mistair Clancy? You, who are the quick cal-cu-la-tor, how much shall I pay?”

Clancy

"How much? Wait now. I'll have to stop drinking cassy if I've got to figure. Wait now. O yes—thirty-six hundred dollars."

"Well, do you see nothing, Mistair Clancy?"

"I begin to get a glimmer. Thirty-six hundred dollars before you can buy any bait for your own little fleet this spring?"

"Ex-act-ly—and why? Because over in Newfoundland they know that Saint Pierre and Miquelon belong to France and that we cannot help ourself. They think so and they are right—maybe. Will you honor me, my friend? Ah, yes—a leet-le tush—allow me. It is good wine—yes. I will drink with you this time. To your very fine health, Mistair Clancy."

"Throw it into you, and here's hoping you'll die the way you like best."

"Thank you. And if I can obtain the bait I can have twenty other sheeps for which to furnish bait this spring to come. Now, our captains say they will not go to Newfoundland and pay the tax—a dollair and a half the ton. They will not pay the tax to the English flag. They will get bait some other place. But no-tice, Mistair Clancy, no-tice. If bait is here our fishermen will buy. If herring is here our fishermen will buy—yes, oh, yes. And over there in Newfoundland, in Fortune Bay, in Placentia Bay,

Clancy

everywhere is plenty herring—for how much? For how much, Mistair Clancy?”

“Oh, cheap, dirt cheap. On the Tubal we expected to pay a dollar and a quarter or a dollar and a half.”

“There—one dollair and a half shall we say? And here how much? Five dollairs. Yes. There it is. My schooner now here in Saint Pierre will carry fifteen hundred barrels, if you load her deep. And you would load her deep, most deep, I am sure, Mistair Clancy. Over to Placentia Bay, where your vessel now is—Captain Bradley—it is not far, not more than one hundred miles clear up to head of bay—not much more—one hundred miles. A short voyage that is. You begin to see. You know the coast well, Mistair Clancy—nobody better. And you are a bold man, a bold man, Mistair Clancy. You are a man—how shall I say?—a man of resource, yes. You know your bees-i-ness—that is it, Mistair Clancy—you know your bees-i-ness—hah?”

“M-m—Easy there or I’ll take to blushing. Let’s have another little touch and think it over. Here, better get another bottle—this one’s ashore.”

“Anothair bottle—cert-ain-ly. A dozen if you weesh it. O, Antoinette, Antoinette—of the same, Antoinette. She goes. It comes. It

Clancy

comes, my friend. And you are a man who likes li-i-fe, Mistair Clancy. You like wine, music, the dance, the pree-ty face—a-ha-a—you like to li-i-ve, Mistair Clancy, and you do not fear to take a chance, as you would say in your country. You see, I know you fishermen of Gloucester and I spik your style sometimes. Shall I drink to our success?—you shall have one-quartair of the profits.”

“Yes? But ain’t you kind of rushing things along?”

“Ah, but you are not one who hes-i-tates. No sair, not you, Mistair Clancy. Your good health, your very best health, mon ami—my friend.”

“Well, here’s a shoot. I’m stranded and you’re a fox. What kind of a crew can I get?”

“Whatever you weesh. Yourself, a cook, and four men, five men, seex men, or more if you weesh it so.”

“Six men and a cook will be plenty to handle her if she’s that vessel layin’ down at your dock. I s’pose that’s your dock and store near where our vessel was layin’ Monday. Our skipper must’ve bought his rum from you?”

“Ah-h—say nothing. Your skippair is a fox, as you yourself would say. Reads the Bible, but a fox.”

“H-m-m—you’ve got Captain Josh properly



Clancy

tagged, ain't you? And I s'pose you've got me sized up, too?"

"Oh, Mistair Clan—"

"Oh, Mistair Miller! It's all right. You can't hurt my reputation. I've been three times disrated—three times I've been skipper, and three times back to the forehold. That's pretty near the record for a man of thirty-six. That's all, thirty-six. A little gray around the temples and a little strained in the heart, but only thirty-six, Old Man."

"Ah, you have the vi-vac-ity of a boy, Mistair Clancy. You have the nerve—what a soldier is in you! And when you are going, I shall give you a letter of credit to a collector of customs over there, who will protect you in his district. You understand? He will wink the eye, look the othair way. But do not use it unless you are about to be captured, because he will want a share, you understand, a share. He knows not of this schooner—that it is my schooner. No. And so, you understand, why pay out more than is nec-es-sary? But, of course, if you are in a tight place——"

"I can use it," finished Clancy. "But don't try and fool me like you're fooling this collector you're speaking of. No double-cross or you and me'll get in a knot. Remember, you do unto me

Clancy

as you would have me do unto you, as Captain Josh is fond of saying. But if it's to be the other way,—you do me and you can count on it I'll do you—or try to. I'll stop at nothing—nothing—once the war's on. And now you want to fit this vessel out. By the way, what's her name?"

"Any name you please—for this voyage."

"For this voyage?—you're sure a fox. Well, call her the Marguerite."

"As you say. This very day it shall be painted on—Marguerite. It is pree-ty."

"So was she. Let's have one to Marguerite—

Oh, have you seen my Marguerite?

O Marguerite, O Marguerite—

But of course you ain't. Nor nobody else around here—she's a dream. Here's a shoot. Now you want to load her up with plenty of cassy wine and red rum—plenty of cassy wine and red rum in her fore and after runs. I'll attend to the stowing of it after we put out."

"It is done—cassis wine and red rum. And a case of champagne for yourself—in your own locker."

"Well now, by the Lord—a case of champagne! Good! Miller, you're all right. And I'll load her so full of herring that we'll have to



Clancy

pile the chain anchor on the hatches to keep 'em under."

"Ah, what a man! They told me about you. What a man! They told me."

"Did they? Did Captain Josh quote something from Scripture to specially fit my case? And we'll need some ready money. Now you don't know but what I might jump out on you, so I don't ask you for any money, but give it to some one of the crew you can trust. Make one of them purser."

"The cook, Mistair Clancy, shall be my brothair."

"Shall he, though?—the cook? All right. How do you say cook in French?"

"Oh—le cuisinier, le chef, le cordon bleu maybe, but——"

"Quee-see-neer—chef—cord-ong, cord-ong bloo—in case I have to call him in a hurry, you know. Quee-see-neer—chef—how's that last?—O yes, cord-ong bloo. I'll remember those."

"Very well. His name is Jean, my brothair Jean. He spiiks English and French also."

"Jean—Jane—I'll remember that, too. Jane, O Jean, my pretty Jane. Speaks English and French, does he? That'll be good—to have somebody aboard c'n speak English and French both. In case we have to slip the anchor or take

Clancy

off sail so's to hide against a black rock in a hurry and the crew don't get on to my accent quick enough, I'll wake the cook. You've got to be ready for such things. You can't tell, our luck might be as bad's that. We may have to heave a cask over—with a line made fast to it, of course—a good strong painter and little buoys like they use for lobster pots. Who knows, we may have to heave a collector of customs over——”

“The Collector! But with care, Mistair Clancy, with care.”

“With care—cert'nly, with care. By the Lord, but I b'lieve a murder wouldn't jar you so long's you run no danger of getting found out. I really b'lieve—but don't you worry. We may set a tide-waiter adrift——”

“Of course, Mistair Clancy, they look into those things—adreeft in a good harbor.”

“Be sure—in the best. Don't worry—we'll pick out a harbor with plenty of water when we turn them adrift. But strategy—strategy—that'll be lawful in this case.”

“Of course, Mistair Clancy. And now a shake of the hand and one leet-le tush. I like that—one leet-le tush.”

“Do you now? But nothing wonderful. You know what Shakespeare said, ‘One touch of cassy makes the whole world kin.’ He knew. They



Clancy

say that when Shake was in his prime he didn't do a thing to the old red stuff himself. Well, here's a shoot."

III

After a time it came to the ears of the collector of customs at Good Hope that a smart-looking vessel with a French crew was doing illegal things in and about the more retired harbors and coves of the bay.

"Pooh, pooh," said the collector, when the matter was first brought to his attention—"pooh, pooh—I've been on those wild-goose chases before. Now, if it was an American vessel—one of those Gloucester fishermen—it might be different, though even they are beginning to have a care. There was Captain Bradley of the Tubal Cain only last week. He's got his lesson. But a Frenchman!—he wouldn't dare—pish, Harvey, pish."

Though the collector in that fashion sniffed at the first word of these alleged illegal acts, yet he was brought gradually to believe in the truth of the rumors; and so, forsaking his slippers and his comfortable chair by the glowing grate, he got into his boots and went aboard the Sleepless, in which he was wont, when his periods of action

Clancy

were on, to cruise after smugglers and other enemies of the customs law.

A good little vessel was the Sleepless, of about sixty tons, schooner rigged and mounting two one-pounders on her forward deck. The collector came aboard, made known his wishes, and immediately retired to the cabin for a preparatory nap; the captain issued his orders, walked the quarter, and they were off on a hunt for the audacious Frenchman.

It was a most elusive craft they found themselves chasing. If there were people along shore who, making no profit out of the French vessel, went out of their way to volunteer enlightening information to the customs officers, there were also others who, having profited by her and hoping to profit again, went just as far out of their way to circulate mystifying reports of her. Between the two, the true and the misleading, the collector spent some days in a baffling search.

But he caught up with her at last. In a retired back cove, into which the Sleepless seemed to find her way by accident, they stumbled on the Frenchman. There she was, lying at a rum-cask mooring, which plainly was arranged to be slipped in a twinkling; with all her lower sails standing, there was the Frenchman—Marguerite was the name disclosed by the glass—and even

Clancy

then her crew were dumping herring into the hold.

"Great Scott!" said the collector, "loaded to the scuppers. Bear down, Captain Harvey, and let them see our guns. We'll teach them."

"Ahoy—" he called out as the Sleepless approached—"ahoy—aboard the schooner."

A man with a great black beard and showing a great shock of black hair, when he removed his cap to rub his forehead, came out of the cabin and answered, "Ahoy—vat ees it?"

"I'll tell you when I come aboard, you pirate." He came over in his dory, stepped over the rail, and approached the bewhiskered man. "Now then, Mosseer, what are you doing here?"

"Vat?"

"Vat? Don't you vat me. What are you doing here, I say. At what port did you enter? Where are your papers? Let me see them. Don't you stand there and grin at me—get your papers. Do you understand?—your papers—pa-a-pers—pa-a-a-pers, do you understand? I am the Collector of Customs at Good Hope."

"I spik no English, Your Highness."

"You don't? Does nobody speak English here?"

"Nobody? Oui, oui. One—ho—ho—Jane,

Clancy

attenday. Your Highness, Jane comes soon and spiiks." The French skipper bowed low.

"Hah—Jane! Women aboard, you licentious pirate, with your big beard and gaudy red shirt and cap—Jane, hay?"

"Oui, oui—Jane—Come queek, Jane. Oh—Cord-ong bloo—come queek. Hees Highness, he waits. Queek, Jane—queek."

"Oui, oui, mon capitaine—one mo-moment. Que voulez-vous—what weesh you, mon capitaine?" A voluble fellow was he who now bounced up out of the fo'c's'le and came running along the deck to the group on the quarter.

To him the collector turned. "So you're Jane, hah?"

"Oui, Your Highness, Jane—Jean—as you say. I am the cook."

"The cook, eh? Well, tell this captain of yours that I am the Collector of Customs at Good Hope—Wellington Spriggs, Collector of Customs, and I have reason to believe, good reason to believe, that he has not registered at any port in Newfoundland—that he has not paid the tonnage, and is therefore getting bait in defiance of the law—of the law—of the law of Newfoundland—in defiance of the law of Great Britain. Tell him that. Wait, tell him first I want to see his papers—that will settle it. If he has cleared

Clancy

in any of our ports he must have the collector's receipt for his tonnage tax, and he must have his ship's papers, anyway."

"Ah-h—pa-pairs. It ees the documents you weesh—ah-h. O yes. Mon capitaine—" the cook turned to his commander—"le gentilhomme—Hees Highness—veut voir—wish to see—les documents—the pa-pairs."

"Yes, his papers," broke in the collector, "and show them quick, tell him, or I'll take him into custody now—now. Do you hear?—now. I shall take him at once to Placentia and from there telegraph to Saint John's to have the cutter come and seize this vessel and put you all in jail—in jail, do you hear? Tell this pirate captain of yours with the whiskers—tell him that. Yes, I mean you"—he glared at the whiskered captain. "Don't you show your teeth at me."

Mr. Spriggs stamped his foot and shook his fist at the French captain, who drew himself up with great dignity. "Je ne comprong, sair—no understand, sair—" and to his cook, "Jane, queek, queek—vat says thees gentle-home—gentle-home—bah!"

"Il dit, mon capitaine, qu'il veut voir les documents—the pa-pairs."

"Vooly-he to see mon pa-pairs, Jane?"

Clancy

"Oui, oui, mon capitaine."

"Direz-voo to heem, Jane—no. Non! Vouly-voo tang say mong coor, je vooz arm, blang mang, ploo belle, mong doo, quee-see-neer, cord-ong bloo, cord-ong bloo, sackray blur—sack-r-r-ay blur I say—whoop-ee—ein—zwei—drei—certain-mong—skaal, slainte, prosit—mong pa-pairs—ness pah, Jane?"

"Oui, oui, mon capitaine—oui, oui."

"Ah, ah, say to heem, Jane—say to the gentle-home, Jane—go to the dev-eel, go to the dev-eel, Jane—go to the dev-eel."

"What!" whooped the collector, "what! To my face, too, you pirate—to my face!"

"Yes, sair—to your fass. You do not like? Then go to the hell, Mistair—Mistair—kell ay votre nom—cochon—peeg. Go to the deveel, sair—to the hell, I say—dam—dam."

"Oh-ho, that's it, is it? I'll soon have you fixed. You'll come with me to Placentia, and in port order, too. I'll telegraph to Saint John's for cutter. I'd telegraph this minute if there was a station here. We shall see, we shall see, sir. In the morning we shall be in Placentia. Tell your captain, you—you, you interpreter—tell him we leave for Placentia at once—at once. I shall stay aboard to see that he goes there. I am now in charge of this schooner. My own

Clancy

schooner will go along with us. You understand, Frenchy? Compronnay voo?"

"Yes, sair." The cook turned to the captain and started to translate the collector's speech, but that impetuous character burst forth before the cook had finished, "Ha, je dee, it ees oon out-rajh—oon out-r-r-a-a-jh."

"It is the law," returned the collector, majestically. "It is the law—the law of England—of Great Britain. To defy it is to defy the flag—the British Empire itself. Go you"—he waved a hand to the men who had rowed him from the Sleepless to the Marguerite—"go you to the Sleepless and tell Captain Harvey to follow on behind. I stay aboard to see that no evidence is destroyed, and that my wishes are obeyed."

IV

With Collector Spriggs on her quarter, arms folded, the Frenchman sailed out of Folly Cove. Clearing the point that jutted into the little bit of water running out of the cove, the Frenchman, by the collector's direction, hauled up and laid her course for Placentia across the bay. Less than a cable's length astern followed the Sleepless. Standing on her after-deck, Captain Harvey, the

Clancy

collector's right-hand man, followed every move of the Frenchman.

"Placentia, sure enough," observed Captain Harvey to the man at the wheel. "We'll be there nicely in the morning. Yes, sir, even with this light breeze we'll be to Placentia in the morning."

The sun by this time was beginning to drop below the high hills astern, and the sails of the Frenchman, though she was not more than a cable's length ahead, had already begun to merge into the haze of a blue dusk. Captain Harvey, noting this, said: "I think we'd do well to get up abreast of that fellow. We want to be able to see her lights, so's we can keep right close when it gets darker."

That was plainly the opinion of everybody aboard the Sleepless, but when it came to putting the plan into execution they found it was not so easy. The Frenchman was drawing ahead.

"Who'd ever think a vessel loaded so deep could beat us in this light breeze, and her with only her lower sails on?"

"Seems to me I can make out her tops'l set," volunteered one of the crew.

"What? But maybe so, too. Maybe Mister Spriggs is getting impatient, but wouldn't you think he'd sing out to us first. First thing we



Clancy

know she'll be slipping away, and there they'll be in Placentia long before we are, maybe. I think we'd better get word to him. Drop the dory over, two of you, and row to him. It's a light breeze yet and you'll have no trouble ketching her. Go ahead and ask Mister Spriggs something about it—get more instructions."

Two men, putting off in the dory, were soon clear of their own vessel and gaining on the Frenchman. But they had yet half the distance to make when it began to breeze up a trifle. Not much of a wind as yet, but enough to render futile the efforts of the men in the dory.

"She's leaving us," said one of them.

"She cert'nly is," rejoined the other.

"Yes, and it seems to me she's got her sheets eased off pretty free for a vessel going to Placentia. Don't it you?"

"I was thinking that, too—pretty well to the south she's heading. I think you'd better hail her."

"All right. Ahoy—Mis-ter Spriggs—a-ho-o-y there—the Marguerite. A-ho-o-y—Mis-ter Spriggs—a-ho-o-y—the Mar-guer-i-i-te."

No answer.

"Maybe they don't understand English. Can't you ahoy in French?"

"What is it in French?"

Clancy

"I dunno, don't you?"

"No. But that cook they got ought to understand English."

"Yes, but maybe he's below getting supper or something."

"That's so. But Mister Spriggs oughter heard."

"Yes, but maybe he's below too, talking to the French captain."

"That's so, too. Well, let's hail him again."

Again they hailed, both of them, but no answer came back. They hailed a third time, and, still getting no answer, dropped back alongside the Sleepless, climbed aboard, and reported.

"H-m—" grunted Captain Harvey, "h-m—but that's funny. Do our sidelights show clear there forward?"

"Clear, sir," answered the watch.

"Clear, eh? H-m— I'm sure I don't know what to make of it all. I don't understand her swinging off so far to the south'ard. Go into the fore-rigging, one or two of you, and hold her in sight's long as you can."

They tried to hold her in sight, but it was only a short time before they were unable to make out even the shadow of her sails. The captain of the Sleepless, thinking it over, came to the conclusion that his superior had some inex-



Clancy

plicable reason for changing his course. At any rate he himself had his orders to take the Sleepless to the port of Placentia. Doubtless Mr. Spriggs would tell them all about it in the morning. Certainly he himself could do no more than abide events. At his usual hour, therefore, he might just as well turn in, which he did, and slept soundly. In the early morning he awoke refreshed, ascended to the deck and cast a cheerful look into the mists about him.

"No sight or sound of her?" he queried of the man at the wheel.

"No, sir."

"That's queer now. But no it ain't either. If she's been ahead of us all night, she's probably in the harbor now. Let's see. We'll be in there ourselves in another half-hour and then we'll see her, if we haven't passed her in the night. None of the watch didn't report passing any sail in the night, did they?"

"No, sir."

"Oh, well. Soon's we're in the harbor and it comes light we'll see."

They made the harbor and in due time the sun arose and it became broad light. The captain and the crew of the Sleepless gazed ahead. No Frenchman there certainly. Nor behind, no—nor to either side. They went ashore, climbed

Clancy

the highest eminence on the near-by hills and gazed afar. No Frenchman. "It's queer now, ain't it?" said the captain of the Sleepless.

During that day the crew of the Sleepless kept unceasing watch. During the night that followed they also kept watch. Through all the next day they stood expectant, and throughout the long night that followed their vigilance never slackened. At any moment the Frenchman might come in with their chief aboard. Daybreak found them still standing watch. But the Frenchman came not, nor any word of her.

On the morning of this day, the third day of his chief's mysterious absence, the captain of the Sleepless began to have the gravest kind of doubts. Suppose the Frenchman had gone astray? Just where she might have strayed to Captain Harvey could not clearly state. He was puzzled. He was not a morbidly imaginative man, but he was beginning to have an idea by this time that something had happened to Mr. Spriggs.

He telegraphed to half a dozen places in the bay and waited patiently the entire forenoon for the answers. He even telegraphed to Saint John's. "Maybe he took her to Saint John's," Captain Harvey had said to the telegraph operator—the whole port was in his confidence now. "You can't always tell about Mister Spriggs.



Clancy

Sometimes he's as deep as that five-mile hole out in the Atlantic. Maybe he took her to Saint John's. You can't tell, can you?"

The operator agreed that a man never could tell and suggested a telegram of inquiry to Saint John's. The mate also said you couldn't always tell about Mister Spriggs. "Maybe he's at Saint John's—straight to head-quarters. The Lord knows he's gone long enough."

To these two Captain Harvey listened hopefully, and so it came that he telegraphed to Saint John's. But from there as elsewhere it was always the same reply—"No word of Collector Spriggs of Good Hope, nor of a strange vessel loaded with herring and hailing from Saint Pierre, American built and with a French crew—no word."

Then Captain Harvey cleared his decks for action. He started on a cruise for the Frenchman. During what was left of that day, through all of that night, through all the next day and all the night after, he hunted Placentia Bay from Good Hope to the port of Placentia and across to the southward. He held up everything that hove in sight—dories, skiffs, jacks, American fishermen and coast steamers. Had they seen Mister Spriggs, Collector of Customs of Good Hope, or an American-built vessel, Gloucester model, with a French crew aboard—her skipper a man

Clancy

with a lot of black hair and black beard and a red shirt and red cap, who could talk a little broken English?

No, they hadn't—no vessel of that model with a skipper with that queer kind of rigging. In despair Captain Harvey put for home. "We've done our best," said he, "we've done our best. All we can do now, so far's I c'n see, is to lay our course for Good Hope and break it to his family."

V

The Sleepless, returning from her unsuccessful cruise after Collector Spriggs, and with her crew decidedly perplexed, was about to round the northern point of the entrance to the harbor of Good Hope, when into view, from around the southern point, came an American fisherman, which, Captain Harvey soon saw, desired to speak him.

"Good Lord!" he ejaculated, while the two vessels were yet quite a little distance apart, "if that ain't Mister Spriggs standing there forward!—see him?"

At sight of their chief the men of the Sleepless marvelled with their captain. They did not cheer—Mr. Spriggs was not the kind of man at sight



Clancy

of whom subordinates rose up and cheered—but they were glad to see him now. His reappearance relieved a great suspense, and the explanation that he would doubtless make promised to solve a most puzzling mystery.

The collector, with solemn port, stepped aboard his own vessel. He was followed over the rail by an able-looking man with a red cap on his head, a lump on his temple, and two bottles of wine under his arm. The crew of the Sleepless had never to their knowledge seen this big man before, but they knew him for an American despite that red cap, which was plainly of Saint Pierre make.

“Mister Clancy,” said Collector Spriggs, turning to the stranger, “let me introduce Captain Harvey—Captain Harvey, Mister Clancy.”

“Glad to know you, Captain. When’d you get in?” said Mr. Clancy gravely.

“Just arrived,” answered Captain Harvey.

“And my crew, Mister Clancy.” The collector waved an arm that included the whole deck.

“Glad to know you.” Mr. Clancy genially waved an arm—the free arm—that also embraced the whole deck.

“Mister Clancy saved my life,” said the collector, in the tone of an orator before an audience. “If it were not for Mister Clancy I would now be on the bottom off Galantry Head in seventy-

Clancy

five fathoms of water. Wouldn't I, Mister Clancy?"

"Seventy-two, if the charts are right," replied Mr. Clancy.

"Hard and fast on a rock the vessel went, with the waves breaking over her. It was terrible, wasn't it, Mister Clancy?"

"Awful."

"Dreadful—w-h-h— A man could hardly have a narrower escape and live to go home and tell the tale. They can't imagine the danger, can they, Mister Clancy? Appalling, wasn't it?"

"Appalling? Lord, yes—desp'rate. It was looking like life insurance gone over the rail—that's what it was."

"Even Mister Clancy's iron nerve was shaken, Captain. It was enough to scare any man, wasn't it?" continued the collector.

"Enough to scare? Great Lord, I thought I'd die of fright. My hair rose on end."

"There! Harvey, that may give you an idea of it. But come below with us, Captain, and you'll hear the whole story. First, however, put the Sleepless on her way to Captain Joshua Bradley's vessel, the Tubal Cain. Where is she now, Captain?"

"Passed her early this morning on the way here. She's about a dozen miles up the bay



Clancy

taking in herring," answered Harvey. To the man at the wheel he gave the course, then dropped down into the cabin, where he found Clancy, who, with one of the bottles that he had brought aboard placed carefully on the locker beside him, was holding the other firmly by the neck and looking about him with the question: "You haven't got a corkscrew handy, Collector, have you?"

"Wait—wait—" said the collector. "This is on me. I have some stuff here that I know you will appreciate." He lifted a hatch in the cabin floor, and from down in the run passed up a bottle of wine. "There—sh-h—don't let the crew hear us."

"What's it?" whispered Clancy—"cassy, too? My, but you're a fox. No duty, I'll bet. Come now, duty or no duty?"

The collector laid a finger beside his nose. "There's a fellow over in Saint Pierre named Miller—but don't you let on——"

"M-m—" Clancy slid nearer. "M-m— I compronng, as they say in Saint Peer."

"Ah-a— you compronnay—we both compronnay—don't we, eh?" The collector dug an elbow into Clancy's ribs. "Well, Miller and myself understand each other—understand each other. Compronnay-voo?"

"Collector," said Clancy, "but you're a fox."

Clancy

And to look at you, who'd ever think it—and you polley the French like a native."

"Ha-ha—" chuckled the collector.

"You cert'nly are a fox. Now what chance has a poor thick fisherman like myself got against the likes o' you. Lord, I remember when I came down here in a vessel of my own twelve year ago, how near I came to gettin' seized for a couple of little ten-gallon kegs of red rum and a few cases of cassy that somebody said I was trying to smuggle in and you coming after me. Now I never was trying to get anything through without paying duty. Lord, I know better than try to get ahead of you, Collector. 'Tommie,' I says to myself—by way of good advice, d'y' see?—'Tommie,' I says, 'don't you be advised by men like Billie Simms and Tom O'Donnell and Sam Adams and that kind. Dón't you,' I says to myself, 'for if Collector Spriggs ever gets after you, it's all over.' Mind that time, Collector?"

"Don't I? And I notice you never did get caught trying it again."

"No, nor I didn't get caught that time either. Why? Because I didn't have any to ketch. I leave that kind of work to them that thinks they're smart, which I ain't. No, sir, I admit I ain't. But I say"—Clancy gazed solicitously



Clancy

about him—"you haven't got a mug to pour this cassy into, have you, Collector?"

"Yes, I have. Here you are. No, after you."

"You, Captain Harvey?" Clancy pushed over the mug.

"No, after you, Mister Clancy."

"Well, if you both insist. M-m—but just the smell of it's good. Here's a shoot."

The collector then took a drink and Captain Harvey took a drink and the collector started to tell the story of his cruise on the *Marguerite*, so that Captain Harvey might know how it was.

"After I got aboard the Frenchman up there in Folly Cove," he began, "everything was all right for a time till that French captain—maybe you didn't get a good look at him, Harvey—the big fellow with all the whiskers and the lot of hair and the red shirt and red cap like Mister Clancy's——"

"It's the same cap, Collector—remember?" interposed Clancy.

"That the Frenchman's cap? How is that?" inquired Harvey.

"Wait, Harvey, wait. We'll come to that. Let me tell it."

"Yes, Captain, let the collector tell it—and he's the man to tell a story proper, let me tell

Clancy

you. Go on, Collector. But before you start, s'pose we have a little touch—just a little touch of cassy. Nothing like a little wine to aid the memory and assist the imagination. Now, then, a little touch, eh? ”

“ Well, just a little, thank you,” said the collector. “ And just a little, thank you,” said Harvey.

“ And Mister Clancy—just a little, thank you,” said that able seaman softly to himself, and slid it smoothly down.

“ Well, after I was aboard a little while,” resumed the collector, “ that big captain—he was a big fellow, wasn't he, Mister Clancy? ”

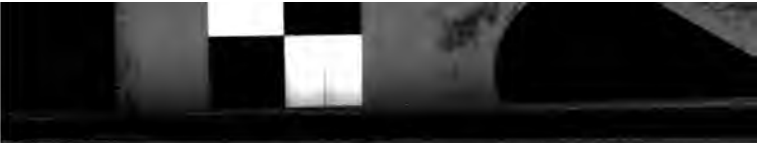
“ Big? My soul, yes—a whale.”

“ 'Bout your height and weight, wasn't he, Mister Clancy? ” ventured Captain Harvey, as one who observes things.

“ Mister Clancy's height and weight!—Great Scott, Harvey, where were your eyes? As big again as you, wasn't he, Mister Clancy? ”

“ As big again? Lord, yes, and twice as big again. A reg'lar whale, we're telling you, Captain. I don't guess you had a good look at him, Captain.”

“ No, maybe I didn't. No, I don't think I did, come to think of it now,” interposed Harvey hastily.



Clancy

"No, I don't think you did," commented the collector severely.

"But where did Mister Clancy come in?" queried Captain Harvey, with his forehead wrinkling under the mental strain.

"Now, Harvey, let me tell it and you'll see where Mister Clancy comes in."

"Yes, Captain, you let the collector tell it and you'll see. I come in later—like Jack Harkaway we used to read about when we was young. In the nick o' time I come. Bing—bing—my trusty revolver cracks out and two redskins bite the dust. Go ahead, Collector—smoke up."

"Well, that big captain motions to me——"

"—in French, was it, Collector?—make it plain to Captain Harvey, you know."

"Yes, in—no, he just motions first and then he says——"

"—in French?"

"Yes. 'Permittay-mwaw,' meaning 'Allow me' or 'Come with me,' the way they say it in French. He meant, 'Allow me to escort you to the cabin'—French style, you know. So we went below and he produces a bottle."

"Cassy, Collector? Make it all clear to Captain Harvey."

"Cassy, yes—and says——"

"Ah, Collector, I know what he said, I'll bet."

Clancy

Clancy leaned genially toward Spriggs. "Come now, will you take me? I'll bet I know. He said, 'Have a little tush?' There, that's what he said, wasn't it? Ain't I right? Of course. And so long as it's on our minds, suppose we have a little touch—just one little touch." Clancy filled a mug for the collector, who took his drink like a man mesmerized, as also did Harvey. Clancy himself took one that drained the bottle, which he then rolled under the stove. "There's one dead. Go on, Collector—drive her."

"Well, to be sociable, you see, I took a drink—a small drink. And he took a drink—an enormous drink. We had a few more, four or five, maybe, I taking moderate drinks and he taking much larger ones. I foresaw that at the rate he was then going he would soon have more than was good for him, but I did not foresee how he would act when he got under the influence. It was about this time I thought I heard a creaking as if they were hoisting sails and paying out sheets, but I wasn't quite sure. However, no matter about that, the big French captain kept getting drunker and drunker. He got so drunk at last that he finally insisted on waltzing with me. Well, I knew, you understand, we couldn't do much waltzing in a fisherman's cabin—and a stove in the middle of the floor too. But, merely



Clancy

to humor him, of course, I pretended to waltz with him, and we waltzed till we knocked the stove over."

"Oon, doo, traw,
Balance like mwaw,"

hummed Clancy.

"What's that?" exclaimed the collector, gazing at Clancy in surprise. "How'd you know that?"

"How? Don't you mind me being in the hold jammed up against the cabin bulkhead? Don't you mind me telling you about that coming over in Billie Simms's vessel?"

"That's so. I forgot that."

"What's chat?" asked Captain Harvey. "Mister Clancy aboard the Frenchman?"

"Now, Harvey," rejoined the collector, "if you'll compel yourself to listen, maybe I'll get through with my story."

"Hush, Captain, hush," said Clancy. "Let the collector tell it. And if Captain Harvey speaks again, Collector, I'll gag him. Your wheel, Collector, and drive her."

"Well, when the stove went over, the ashes fell out and scattered all over the floor, and that seemed to make the French captain mad all at once. He began to swear frightfully in his own language, and I, seeing that trouble might ensue,



Clancy

started to go up on deck. It was my idea, you see, to call out to you on the Sleepless to come aboard with your crew. But he anticipated me. I think now that he was too cunning to allow me to do that, in spite of the liquor that was in him. At any rate he got to the companion-way before me and said something to the man at the wheel—no, he didn't say—he motioned, and they drew the slide over the companion-way tight. That made it pretty dark in the cabin. You may remember it was nearly night when I went aboard. Now, with the cabin dark, I began to think that this fellow, not being able to see very well, would forget all about me, perhaps fall asleep and let me go to sleep too, for I was beginning to feel drowsy.

“But no. He was cunning, as they say mad men are quite frequently in their frenzies. He lit the binnacle lamp and then the cabin lamp and started to look around for me. I was in the port after bunk by this time, up beneath the overhang, and I thought he wouldn't notice me, but he did. ‘A-ha-a—’ he began, and mark the fiendish cruelty of the monster to use his few English words so as make me the better understand his awful intentions. ‘I keel you, I keel you.’ Just to hear him say that, in the way he said it—it would freeze any man's blood just to



Clancy

hear him. He went over to a locker on the other side of the cabin, and, lifting the cover, began to rummage around. 'I get axe and keel heem—the dam Anglishman—' he kept muttering to himself. I don't think he intended me to hear those words about the axe, but I did—my ears are sharp. I saw the horrible doom that was awaiting me, for I knew that I didn't have one chance in a thousand with that inhuman monster. But even then I kept my wits about me and looked around for a chance to escape. I saw the door of the lazaretto wide open—almost beside my bunk it was—and so, while he was hunting in his drunken way for the axe, I slipped out of the bunk and into the lazaretto, took the key out the door, drew the door to after me—noiselessly—and locked it. It was lucky for me that the lazaretto locked that way. I found a coil of rope inside and rolled it against the door and then braced myself against the rope. Then I heard the big brute lumbering back and groping in the bunk for me. 'Where you—where you—come out here, sair—' I could hear him plain's could be. 'Come out here, sair—you dam Anglishman—come out here, sair, for I keel you—come out.' Well, I heard him groping about for a long time before it seemed to occur to him that I wasn't in the bunk. I began to get a

Clancy

chill then, expecting every minute to hear the axe come crashing through the lazaretto door. But it didn't. It strikes me now that it was a peculiar thing that he never happened to think that I might be inside the lazaretto. But it is a fact that it didn't seem to occur to him. But he began to feel in all the other bunks for me. I could hear him plainly even with the door of the lazaretto locked. Well, he didn't find me in any of the other bunks, of course, and lumbering around the cabin, probably very much puzzled by my sudden disappearance, he must have stumbled against the cabin steps and thereby got an idea in his head. Anyway, as if it had just occurred to him, he muttered, 'A-ha—he go on the deck—oop on the deck he go and lock me down here—ah, dam Englishman.' He began to holler then—to the man at the wheel, I imagine—'Henri, Henri—' till the slide over the companion-way was pushed back. Then I could hear his heavy feet pounding the deck over my head and his curses and the stumbling of his big boots as he went forward.

"Well, I was somewhat worried, I admit it now. Naturally anyone would be, but I never lost my head. Though I saw no more of the French captain—I heard him though, as I will tell you later—I made up my mind that I was

Clancy

not out of danger by any means, and I stuck to my hiding-place. All that long night, wide awake, I lay in the lazaretto. They kept coming and going in the cabin. I was wondering all the time how the crew accounted for my disappearance, but a remark dropped by one of them enlightened me. One of them said—and judging by the way their voices came to me they must have been sitting around the stove at the time—‘I see not Mistair Spriggs,’ said he. ‘Ho, ho,’ says another, ‘le capitaine put heem under the floor, so—s-q-q-wik—’ I shuddered. He meant to imply that the captain had cut my throat and stowed my dead body down in the run. That may give you an idea, Captain Harvey, of the kind of a man the big French captain was and of the kind of a crew he had. He was a—what was it you called him in Captain Simms’s cabin when we were coming over?”

“Blue-beard?” suggested Clancy.

“That’s it—Blue-beard. That’s just the name for him.”

“But wasn’t you feeling hungry all the time?” queried Captain Harvey.

“After the first day and night, yes. But I’ll tell you how fortunate I was about food. At night they were in the habit of bringing food and wine back in the cabin to eat before turning in.

Clancy

They always brought more than they could eat, you see, and after they were asleep and the lamp turned low I would steal out and get some of what was left on the lockers—bread, cheese, sardines and wine. They never noticed mornings that any of their food was gone.

“ Well, things went along so until the third night. It was well after midnight but yet far from morning, as I have since estimated, when I was awakened by an awful stamping on the deck over my head, and the rudder post behind me beginning to creak and the vessel to heel over. I was directly under the wheel, you see. Well, I couldn’t swear to what they were saying very well, for they were shouting in French, with only a word or so in English occasionally, but I could make out the big captain’s voice every now and then—’twas he, I think, was speaking the English words. Whatever it was, it didn’t last long. Two or three of them seemed to be coming aft on the run, and then there was a sudden flurry, and blows and curses and bodies falling. ‘ They’re killing somebody,’ I said to myself. I was still wondering what it was all about, when all at once the vessel shoved up forward and the bottom planks were scraping the rocks. She lifted once, twice, again and again—began to pound—and then the water began to come through her. I



Clancy

could hear it—I could feel it—it was swashing on the cabin floor. Instantly I realized my danger and jumped for the lazaretto door, and was about to turn the key and get out and take chances with the big captain even rather than stay there and drown like a rat, when I heard somebody drop down the companion-way and swash around in the water that was pouring into the cabin. I heard a voice—it was the voice of the big captain. I don't know what he said, but I knew his voice. And then I heard him approaching—swash—swash—swash— 'He has found me out and is coming to finish me,' I thought. I heard his hand on the door. 'Open, open,' he called. 'No,' I said. 'Open,' he said again. 'No,' I said determinedly, and then—crash—crash— 'I'm gone,' I said to myself. One more crash and the door gave way, a big boot followed the door, and then—the head of Mister Clancy!"

"No!" ejaculated Harvey.

"Yes, Mister Clancy—wasn't it?" appealed the collector.

"Yes, sir—me—Jack Harkaway—in the nick o' time—just like I told you would happen, Captain. Yes, sir, me, and in the nick o' time. And when I come to think of it now, I must say that I think it is worth having a little touch on.

Clancy

We'll open one of mine now. Yes, yes, Collector, one of mine. What do you say now? A little touch, eh? Just a wee little touch. Why, of course. There you are, throw that into your forehold and tell me if you don't feel better."

VI

"And now, Harvey," said the collector when they all had a "little touch," "Mister Clancy will tell the rest, so that you may know how it all came out."

"Yes," said Clancy, carefully setting the newly opened bottle on end again, "I will clear up the mystery. First, I must tell you, Captain, that all the time Mister Spriggs was under the overhang, a prisoner, as you might say, I was in the after-hold—a prisoner too. You see, I'd stolen aboard the Marguerite one night when she was in Saint Peer Harbor. I'd been having what you might call a little wine-time ashore and my vessel had sailed without me. That's the vessel we're heading for now. By the way, oughtn't we be getting near it, Captain?"

"I've told 'em on deck to tell us when we're there," said Harvey.

"Good. But I'd better make a short story of



Clancy

it anyway. Lemme see, where was I? Oh, yes, stowin' myself aboard the Marguerite at the dock in Saint Peer Harbor. Well, I'd climbed aboard and while I was stepping high, so's not to wake anybody that might be having a kink in his bunk below, I stepped over the after-hatch combing and into the hold. She's got a deep hold, by the way, the Marguerite has for a vessel her size, but why people leave hatches off at night I don't know. I hit something hard down near her bottom somewhere. Just what it was I don't know, but——"

"Her ballast, maybe," suggested Harvey.

"Maybe—or her chain anchor. Anyway, what it was don't matter. I know it warn't lem-on jelly. I went down and out, and when I came to again the vessel was moving and I was tied hand and foot and a gag in my mouth. Of course, being fixed like that I couldn't say much, even if I had anything to say, which I don't think I did, being still maybe a little bit foggy about things. To tell you the truth, I think now that I thought then that I was still asleep and that when I woke up I'd found myself back in the Caffy Middy with the waiter girl bringing on another round of cassy.

"Well, by and by a man came along with a lantern and takes the gag out of my mouth and

Clancy

puts some grub alongside me and a cup of coffee, and says, 'Who you?—who you?' just like that, savage-like, 'Who you?'—kinder weak on English, y'see."

"French?" suggested Harvey.

"Man, but you do catch on to things," said Clancy, admiringly. "That's it, French. I didn't answer, and he says again, 'Who you?' 'Merican, Anglish or vat?' Then I said I was American—Gloucester fisherman. He says, 'Oh!' Well, sir, that's all the talk we had day in and day out—him coming down, taking the gag out of my mouth and feeding me three times a day for I don't know how many days. Ten days I think it must've been—no more talk than that till the night you came aboard, Mister Spriggs. Then another fellow comes down, this one a lad that could talk almost as good English as myself—could talk it as fast anyway—a big, husky, black-skinned fellow—the cook he was, near's I could make out."

"H-m— I know him," broke in Harvey; "black fellow, big and heavy—the interpreter the time you boarded the Marguerite, Mister Spriggs—don't you remember, Mister Spriggs?"

"Yes, it was the cook, Harvey," said the collector. "Captain Simms and Mister Clancy and myself decided that point to our satisfaction on



Clancy

the way over from Saint Pierre this morning. It was the cook. Proceed, Mister Clancy."

"Well, the cook he comes down this night and says, 'Remembair'—do you mind how he used to put those 'airs' in, Collector—'remembair,' he says, and I can tell you, Captain, he was a villainous looking gazabo, and the Collector can tell you too."

"If ever a man had murder in his eyes, Harvey, he was the man," affirmed the collector.

"Collector, you've certainly got him right. It's just as you say. If ever a man had murder in his eye, he was the man. A proper man for a murderer, and the more I think of it, Collector, the more I can't help thinking that it was all a plot now from the start. You see, with you out of the way, they could do all the smuggling they wanted in Placentia Bay."

"Woo-o," shivered the collector.

"Yes, and with you out of the way, where would the British gover'ment be? Now, now, Collector, I know. I know what all the American fishermen say. 'He's a dog,' they says. 'He's a killer in his line—you can't get around Collector Spriggs of Good Hope. No, sir.' Of course, I don't pretent they don't cuss you out pretty often. That's nacheral, and you being a man that knows human nature can hardly blame

Clancy

them for that, now could you? Could you, now? Be honest now, could you blame our skippers for cussing you out when you get ahead of them so often—could you now?”

“Well, I can’t say as I could. It is a very natural feeling, Mister Clancy.”

“Nacheral? It’s as nacheral as wanting to take a drink when you’re thirsty. Well, to go back, Captain Harvey. This cook this night—the night the Collector came aboard—he says going away, ‘Remembair—vat happens on thees sheep you do not know—you do not hear—you do not see. Remembair—say notting, or you are as a dead mans. You say notting, hein—hein’—with his face up to mine, and me with a gag between my jaws.

“Of course, I said nothing. A man with half a wet towel in his mouth don’t generally have too much to say. I only just rocked my head fore and aft like one of them East India idols that bows fore and aft as you put a finger to ’em, and the cook he goes away. I mind that night well, for that was the first night I began to see what tough people I was up against. That was the night, Collector, the French captain nigh did for you in the cabin.”

“Woo-o—” shuddered the Collector, “wasn’t it awful?”



Clancy

"Awful? I should say. Iron nerves you must have, Collector, to be able to sit there now and listen to me telling it."

"My friends say my nerve is good," admitted the Collector.

"It cert'nly must be. Do you remember him waltzing around the cabin with you, him going——

'Oon—doo—traw—
Balance like mwaw.
You are a daisy
But you have your faults.
Your right foot is lazy,
Your left foot is crazy,
But don't be un-ais-y
I'll tache you to waltz.' "

"Was that what he was saying all the time?" broke in the collector, like a man on whom a mysterious truth has just dawned. "Are you sure?"

"Sure as c'n be. I was tied up in the afterhold and gagged, but my ears were free and I could hear him through the bulkhead. And I could see you both after awhile through a little knot-hole I could just reach to look through. Man, but the crust of him! whirlin' you around to that kind of stuff and trying to sing it in English with an Irish brogue—the crust of him—the Irish brogue!"

Clancy

"It was impudent, now I come to think of it."

"Impudent? It was real sassy. Anyway, the second night after that the cook comes to me again and this time—you must mind, Captain, I told the collector this on board Billie Simms's vessel on the way over—this was the time, Captain, he wanted me to do the awful thing. You'd never guess, Captain Harvey, what he wanted me to do."

"What was it?" inquired Harvey in a whisper.

"He wanted me to kill the French captain."

"No!"

"Yes."

"What—murder him?"

"I s'pose that's what he meant. 'Keel heem,' he said."

"What awful people those Frenchmen!" ejaculated Harvey.

"Aren't they?"

"And what did you say to that, Mister Clancy?"

"I said, 'Nev-air, nev-air,' giving it to him in his own kind of talk, y'see."

"And what did he say?"

"Nothing, but just fetched me one with the back end of an axe on the side of the temple. See that lump? Well, that's where the axe bounced off."



Clancy

"Good heavens! A wonder you were not killed?"

"Warn't it? But you see he didn't hit me hard enough. He only just let the weight of the axe drop just over my right eye. You've seen a blacksmith now, haven't you, Captain, let his hammer drop on the anvil—not pounding like he was hammering horse-shoes into shape, but just a little light crack in between the real blows—maybe to illustrate an argument he's having with the loafers hanging 'round the shop, or maybe only to hear the old anvil ring. It's a cheerful sound, ain't it, the ringing of the hammer on the anvil? Did you ever recite in school—

‘Oh, listen to the clanging of the hammer on the anvil—

Goes fine, don't it? Well, this blacksmith of a cook just let the back end of his axe clang on my temple—just let it bounce off once or twice, so I'd remember not to forget. And I didn't."

At this point Clancy was interrupted by the voice of one of the crew. "Captain Harvey, we're getting close to the Tubal Cain."

"All right," answered Harvey up the companion-way. "Put over the dory, and have it ready. Go on, Mister Clancy."

"Lemme see, where was I?"

Clancy

"He'd just hit you on the forehead with an axe."

"Oh, yes. But ain't it most time for a little touch? Can't stop? All right, just as you say, Captain. Well, that little tap threw me into what, if I was a lady, you might call a swoon. I'd been in a swoon yet, maybe, but I was awakened by a hollerin' and shoutin' and stampin' and cursin' on deck, and then the vessel laid over like she was being put by the wind, and then we heard her 'grinding upon the rocks—grinding—grinding she went. Somebody or other was thrown over the side—I heard him splash. Then the water came up through her bottom where the planks was gone and then over her rail and deck amidships and down the hatch. Well, I began to think that with the water rushing down there like that the hold was no place for me, and I got up and climbed out."

"Climbed out?" ejaculated Captain Harvey.
"But wasn't you tied?"

"Eh—what!"—it was Collector Spriggs speaking now, startled into sudden action by Captain Harvey's question. "That's so. Were you not tied, Mister Clancy?"

"Now, Captain—now, Collector—wait and let me tell it. I'll have to hurry, won't I, if we're so handy as your man said to my vessel? He said



Clancy

we was most alongside, didn't he? Here, before we go, just a little touch to finish up this bottle. Now, Collector, just a little touch. It'll never hurt you in the world; nor you, Captain. There you are—throw that in—there, now, don't you feel better already? Come now, don't you? Of course you do. Where was I? Oh, yes—the vessel upon the rocks and men fightin' on the deck and the sea pourin' into her hold. When I got on deck, there was the crew of the Frenchman goin' off in the dory—I c'd just see them in the dark. And there was a man's body just driftin' by her rail amidships, with a red cap with tassels on it. It kind of groaned—the body did—and I made a grab for it, but the tide carried it by and I only caught the red cap, and that came off. I was bareheaded myself, so I put the cap on my own head—this cap I'm wearing now."

"And that's how you come to be wearing the French captain's cap? I was wondering how you got it. So he's dead?"

"Yes, Captain Harvey, he's dead."

"And a good job," injected the collector, "a good job. Go on, Mister Clancy, and tell Harvey how near I came to being drowned in the wreck of the *Marguerite*."

"Oh, yes, that was the exciting part. There

Clancy

was a dory astern, and I was just going to jump into that and try to pick up the French captain, when I happened to think of Mister Spriggs being down under the overhang—maybe locked in and not able to get out. ‘Charity begins at home,’ thinks I, and I jumps below and tells him what’s happened, and we jumps in the dory and rows up Saint Peer Harbor till we spy Billie Simms’s vessel, and he takes us to Good Hope, where we meets with you, and there you are.”

“Yes, Harvey, there you are. It happened just as Mister Clancy tells it. Was it not wonderful, and did I not have a narrow escape, Harvey?”

“Most miraculous,” commented Harvey. “And the French captain is dead?”

“Dead, yes, and a good thing,” answered Collector Spriggs, “for if ever a brute sailed the sea he was one. Just think how he would have made way with me—killed me with the axe in the cabin!”

“Oon—doo—traw—
Balance like mwaw—”

hummed Clancy absently.

“Mister Clancy, I wish you would not sing that,” observed Spriggs.

“Oh, all right, Collector, only I was thinking to myself how lucky you were.”



Clancy

“Lucky indeed. Where would I be now only I had the wit to think of getting under the overhang and stay there?”

“That’s right, Collector. You cert’nly stood by the overhang in good shape. When I came down after she’d gone up on the rocks I thought for a minute we’d both be drowned there—between stopping to break in the door and rescuin’ them two bottles o’ cassy. But that’s past now. We made it, didn’t we, Collector? Up the cabin steps, and the deck sinking under our feet. Over the rail and into the dory with us, and then the lucky thing—finding Billie Simms to take us over, which reminds me we need a little touch, now the story’s ended. Where’s that bottle? O Lord, empty! Two dead”—he kicked it under the stove—“I’ve half a mind to open this one. No, I’ll keep it for Captain Josh. Well, I’m off. It’s a shame to hurry away from you, Collector, and from you, Captain, with your entertaining ways, but I know you both want to get back to Good Hope. So good-by. Good-by, good luck.”

Clancy leaped up the cabin-steps and onto the deck. In four strides he was in her waist. “Where’s that dory? Oh, yes”—he dove over the rail and into the dory. “Good-by—good-by”—he waved his last bottle of cassis back to

Clancy

Spriggs and Harvey who had just reached the deck—"I'll see you at Good Hope on the way back to Gloucester. So long, and now, fellows"—he beamed on the two men who were rowing—"drive her, fellows, drive her, for

My captain calls and I must go,
So, brothers, row, row, row.
I'll hang my harp on a weeping willow tree,
I'll take my blooming kit and go, go, go."

Clancy's tuneful, if somewhat husky, voice floated back to Collector Spriggs and Captain Harvey as they stood by the rail of the Sleepless and watched the dory flying toward the Tubal Cain.

"Now, was it not all wonderful, Harvey?" again inquired the Collector.

"Yes, sir. You were lucky, Mister Spriggs."

"Wasn't I? Captain Simms, after hearing the story on the way over here in his vessel, said it was almost incredible. He said if he hadn't known Mister Clancy, known him personally and by reputation, he would not have known what to make of it—no, he wouldn't," he said.

"It was wonderful, Mister Spriggs. But what puzzles me is how Mister Clancy got loose in the hold when he was tied up so tight. I meant to've asked him—I did ask him, now that I think of it, but he forgot to answer."



Clancy

"So he did, didn't he? I meant to ask him that, too. I will when I see him again. But that French captain is dead, Harvey. I'd hardly believe it only that Mister Clancy is in possession of his red cap. I know the cap. That's one good thing, Harvey—the French captain."

"Yes, it's good he's gone. But I wonder how Mister Clancy ever got loose in the hold after he was tied up so tight and gagged. I wish he hadn't forgotten to explain that."

"Oh, he'll explain that when we see him next time," said the Collector, reassuringly. "You don't know Mister Clancy like I know him. He's one of those simple, appreciative men that you can't but like after you get to know him. He thinks there's nobody like me."

VII

Captain Joshua Bradley was perplexedly overhauling some bills and receipts in the cabin of the Tubal Cain when he heard the scraping of boot-heels on deck.

"H-m—that's him." Captain Joshua had hardly grunted that when Clancy, cheerful and smiling, dropped down the companion-way.

One or two things had gone wrong with Captain Joshua, and so he found it easy to meet his

Clancy

returned scapegrace with a face that was screwed up to express what might be considered a proper degree of righteous reprobation.

"By the Lord, Skipper," greeted Clancy, beamingly, "but I'm glad to see you. When'd you get in?"

"When'd I get in? Go to—Halifax with you. How came you to be in the Collector's vessel? Oh, never mind how I know. I s'pose you think it all right to be messing with a man that fined me a couple of hundred dollars and threatened to seize my vessel, too—the thick-headed, feathery, cacklin' old hen."

"Sh-h—Skipper. Wait now till I tell you. I've got one on the Collector. He seized my vessel, too."

"Your vessel! What in the name o' Tophet are you talking about?—your vessel!"

"My vessel, yes, sir. You don't know. Of course you don't know. How could you—but—

'Jer swee le capitaine de la Marguerite,
De la Marguerite, de la Marguerite—
Jer swee le capitaine de la Marguerite,
My Marguerite so belle'—

"Oh, but wait now and let me tell you. And we'll open this bottle of cassy while we're waiting. Just a second now and we'll have a little touch—just you and me, Skipper."



Clancy

Clancy seized a pair of woollen stockings that were lying by the fire and crowding them into the heel of the bottle began the muscular operation of jolting the cork out of the bottle. He never ceased to talk during all the time he was doing it. "Now let me tell you—in a minute I'll have this cork loose—best cassy in Saint Peer. Wait till you get a whiff and I'll bet you'll be saying so, too. If you'd be gettin' a mug ready—of course you've got a mug handy, Skipper? In your stateroom of course. Ought to knowed. There, try that for a throat gargle. Ain't it all right? What? You bet. Oh, no, I don't know a thing about cassy wine. Oh, no, not a thing! Well, when you put out of Saint Peer that morning, abandoning me like——"

"Abandoning you? Why, you son of Ananias, I sent two men up after you and they nearly raised the roof off Caffy Middy till Miller told 'em they'd have to stop making so much noise——"

"Miller?"

"Yes, Miller—the man I bought my rum off that was afterward seized by old Spriggs. And who ever told old Spriggs I don't know, but if he'd been told by Miller he couldn't have been more prompt."

"He was."

Clancy

"Was what?"

"Told by Miller. Sh-h— Captain Josh, abate thy wrath, righteous though it be, and I'll tell you how I fixed Miller. But first finish that up and let's have another little touch. Saved this bottle for you out the wreck. Came near losing old man Spriggs to rescue it for you."

"What wreck?"

"Oh, we was in a wreck—me and old man Spriggs—and I hauled him out. He was down under the overhang ossified with——"

"What! Old Spriggs drunk?"

"No, no, fright. He'd got over his drunk."

"And you saved him? Why in the name of David didn't you let him drown?—the old granny."

"Well, I s'pose 'twouldn't be an awful loss to the world. But as 'twas owin' to me he was there in the first place—and there was his family. Well, anyway—but drink that up and let's have another. What do you say now, Skipper—another little touch. Who was the prophet in the Good Book that said: 'A little wine for thy stomach's sake?' You mustn't go back on the Good Book, you know. No, sir, not on the Good Book. Come now, another little touch?"

"Well, just a little. M-m— by gosh, but that's good cassy, Tommie."



Clancy

"Ain't it now? Trust me—saved from the wreck for you, Skipper—for you, mind. Well, to go back. When I came to in the Caffy Middy, the first man I met was Miller."

"I hope you punched him?"

"Hoped I punched him, Captain Josh? Captain Josh, think of the Bible lessons of your youth. Not as I blame you much, though, come to think. Maybe if I knew as much then as I do now, I'd've soaked him good and proper and taken a chance with the Johnny Darmes. Well, I first thought of going back to Halifax, but I had only half passage. So me and Miller cut cards to see if I'd have enough for my passage or nothing at all. I won and then won again, making me in ten dollars. That was passage and drink money over, but I began to think I'd like to go in style. Yes, I thought I might just as well go saloon, and when Miller says, 'Twenty or nothing?' I says, 'All right.' We cut—me a king—him a king. Then he cut. What d'y' s'pose? An ace? Yes. 'Tommie,' I says to myself, 'but there was a most suspicious twirl to those cards. Tommie,' says I, 'you're up against it—he's doing you, but you can't prove it.' He left me a two to cut and I was broke."

"By the Lord!"

Clancy

"Yes. So he finding me in the humor and all the time helping the humor along with plenty of cassy—he just wetting his lips and letting me take 'em down to the heel, which I didn't object to, being pretty thirsty—he makes the offer that I come over here to Placentia and pick up herrin' without paying the tonnage tax. 'You get a quartair of the profits,' says he. That meant a thousand dollars to me on a good trip. 'I'll go you,' says I, and we fits out the Marguerite and I comes over.

"We were getting along all right until Spriggs gets wind of it and after a lot of hide and seek playing in and out behind the rocks and coves he corrals us up at Folly Cove. We'd been ashore to dances three nights running and maybe was a bit sleepy this day. Dancing all night and drivin' your work all day—you can't keep it up, Captain Josh, can you?"

"You cert'nly can't."

"That's what I say—now. Let's have a little touch on that. You do give good moral advice, Captain Josh. Here y'are. Throw it into you, and here's a shoot on me. Well all this time I was supposed to be a Frenchman from Saint Peer. I'd a big wig of hair and a big brush of beard and a red shirt and cap to rig up with—all ready handy in case I needed 'em—the red



Clancy'

cap with a swell tassel—you oughter've seen it—decorated—gorgeous.”

“ Any worse than the one you got on now ? ”

“ By the Lord, Captain Josh, I forgot. This is the cap, and the shirt—see here. I've been buttoned up to the chin ever since, so's the Collector wouldn't see—all the way over with Billie Simms.”

“ H-m— Billie Simms. You and him must've told old Spriggs some fine yarns between you.”

“ Oh, if you'd only heard ! ‘ By the Lord,’ Billie says to the Collector, ‘ if 'twas anybody else but my old friend Clancy told me I wouldn't believe it. No, Mister Spriggs, I wouldn't.’ We was telling the story between us—of the cruise of the Marguerite—but here and there where Spriggisy didn't know about I was fillin' in the gaps—and Billie never letting a wink out of him, not a wink. ‘ By the Lord,’ Billie'd say, ‘ if 'twas anybody else, Collector, but Tommie Clancy was telling it, I wouldn't believe it,—no, sir.’

“ Well, to go back. When the Collector came aboard the Marguerite up in Folly Cove and he begins to talk to me, and me bein' a Frenchman by the way and not able to understand English, has to have a man talk for me—so I sings out for my cordong bloo——”

“ Your what ? ”



Clancy

“My cor-dong bloo—my cook. I sings out for the cook to come and interpret—interpret, mind you, Captain Josh. And a proper villain was that same cook, but I fixed him later—Miller’s brother, by the way, Cap.”

“No? Then I hope you killed him?”

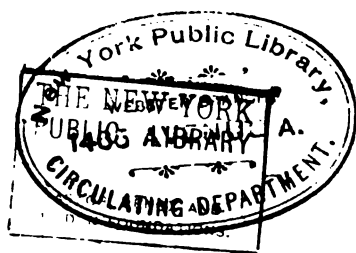
“Not quite. At least there’s no report he’s dead yet. But that part comes later—about me and the cook. The Collector and myself gets in a knot and finely he winds up by sayin’ we was in custody and orderin’ us over to Placentia. Just think of ordering a man to take his own vessel over to be soaked! The Lord only knows what we wasn’t going to get—to the mines, I callate. Well, we starts off with the Collector aboard and his schooner and crew following on behind. When we were clear of the cove, with a promise of breezin’ up, and by way of bein’ nice to the Collector, I invites him into the cabin, where I begins to throw cassy into him and to work on his imagination, and I gets very drunk by the way—I’m the French captain all the time, mind. ‘Waltzay-voo,’ I says—

‘Oon—doo—traw—
Balance like mwaw.’

I starts—and him so rattled—oh, Lord! After the waltz I went hunting for an axe to kill him. and



“Any worse than the one you got on now?”





Clancy

him, with his hair standing up with horror, spies the lazaretto open, hops in and locks the door. Well, we put in a lot of time dodging into quiet coves and we keeps him in there two days and three nights—all the time working toward Saint Peer—giving him a chance to steal out nights and get grub. It was a sin and a shame, I know, to fool him like that, but Lord, he was a proper mark!

“Now, all the time I was playing the collector, the cook—Miller’s brother—was playing me, and it was quite a while before I was sure that something was wrong. But I put this and that together, and I made out that when we got into Saint Peer I was to get the double cross, as they say ashore. The quarter profits Miller promised me—over a thousand dollars it might have been with our load—wasn’t comin’, d’y’ see? And if I made a holler I was to be turned over to the Johnny Darmes and slapped into the lock-up for kidnapping the collector. Well, when I woke up to that I was a proper mad man, but I kept it all to myself till we was almost into Saint Peer Harbor. About two o’clock in the night it was this time—there was one man to the wheel, a watch for’ard and the rest in the fo’c’s’le—when I goes to the fo’c’s’le companion-way and called a couple of ’em up.

Clancy

‘The dories,’ says I—‘put two over the side and let one of ’em drop astern.’ They dropped ’em over. ‘Now tell the chef to come up. Tell the quee-see-neer to come up,’ I says, and they go below and sends the cook up. ‘Chef,’ says I, ‘you’ve got a roll of money below and twelve hundred or a thousand of it’s comin’ to me, and I want to be paid off. Your brother said that just as soon’s I brought this vessel in sight of Saint Peer Harbor with a load of herrin’ I could draw my quarter profits. Now, I might find an American vessel in the harbor and get a passage, maybe, to Placentia Bay, where my vessel, the Tubal Cain, Captain Bradley, is, and I don’t want to lose any time, so will you be so good and kind as to let me have the money?’ Just like that I said it, as nice and polite as any Frenchman that ever drank Christmas wine in the Caffy Middy itself. It was a kind of a lightsome night, and all the time I was talking I could make out something of the cook’s face—specially his eyes, and they looked wicked, as though he was going to soak me one. They’re hell on good manners, some of them Saint Peer Frenchmen, and this one was a killer for politeness—in his way, Captain Josh, but it was a jeesly aggravatin’ way.

“The cook smiles. But the smile, Captain Josh, the smile! I ketches that smile, and I



Clancy

says quick, 'Cordong, if I don't get the money now, the Marguerite goes up on the rocks. Do I get it?' Well, he dropped his politeness, made a swipe at me and I made one at him. We landed pretty near together, but me a bit first, maybe, and he goes back and down the fo'c's'le steps. As he goes down, I hollers, 'A bah with you!' 'A bah,' Captain Josh, means 'to hell with you' in French. I got that out just as the for'ard watch, getting onto the game, steps over and swings at me. I sends the watch after the cook, then jumps back aft to the wheel and says to the lad there, 'Get out!—'raus mit sie!—allay!—a bah!'—I wanted to be sure he understood me, and he went for'ard after I helped him along with a few good, swift kicks. The Marguerite all this time'd been goin' free, straight for the harbor, but when I got clear of the man at the wheel I hauled her up and, pointing her up plump for the nearest bit of shore, I lets her drive. She didn't have but a cable-length to go, there was plenty of wind and she laid over to it fine. When I made sure she was so close she couldn't go wrong, I put the wheel in the becket and waited for the cook and his gang, who was now hopping out of the fo'c's'le and jumping aft for me. They came piling along by the house. There was two in the wind'ard gangway and an-

Clancy

other one to looard—all of them close up by the time I let go the wheel and was ready for 'em. I went for the two to wind'ard. With the first one I buried my fist somewhere in his nice fat jowls, and down he goes, blocking up the gangway. The next one comes, and it was the cook, and he had some kind of a rolling-pin in his hand—not a pie-crust rolling-pin, for them Frenchmen, you know, Skipper, don't have pies like us, but he had some kind of a rolling-pin, and he steps up on the chest of the fellow who was down and makes a swipe at me—lunges at me with the rolling-pin and misses—misses, Skipper, and then I had him. Then I had him. Do you mind the time I stayed ashore and went to Carson City to see the Corbett-Fitzsimmons fight? Mind how the owners kicked up because it was in Lent, and me fresh-fishin', and the market away up? Well, that fight was all right, and old Fitz he's the real thing. You oughter seen that fight, Captain Josh."

"I wish I had. Excitin', warn't it?"

"Excitin'—a dog of a fight. Well, after they'd been fighting about an hour, old Fitz begins to draw him good and begins to get him where he wants him. I was close down to the ring and could see it all—Fitz winkin' at his wife—she was there—over Corbett's shoulder, and Corbett,



Clancy

because he didn't have the stuff in him, beginning to look blue and frizzled gray, like an old had-dock too long out o' water. They came to the last round. Fitz makes a bluff, and Corbett swings and misses—misses, mind, Skipper—just like the cook at me, only Corbett didn't have a rolling-pin. He swings and misses, and his stomach sticks out, and Fitz—old Fitz—lets him have it, a nice, sweet hook—in the stomach you and me'd call it, though 'twas the solar plexus they called it. Well, when Fitz hits him in the solar, Corbett kind of collapses and lets his jaw fall for'ard—for'ard, mind, toward old Fitz, and when it does, Fitz, the hefty lad, jolts him with the other hand and drives it back aft again. Left—right—see, like this—and Mister Corbett he goes down and out. Well, I said to myself when Corbett was lifted out of that, if ever a man comes at me like Corbett did Fitz, that I'd know how to handle him. So when the cook makes a swipe at me this time, the Fitz-Corbett fight pops up in the back of my head, and when he swipes and misses I remembers Carson City. He near lost his balance with his swing, and I lets him have the first one full and fair in the stomach, like Fitz, and then when he kind of collapses, same as Corbett did, and his head comes for'ard to me, I sent my right across—sort of half across—close-

Clancy

hauled you might say—into his jaw—and, Skipper, cordong bloo he goes down and out. When I landed him first, he was standing with legs astraddle the other fellow at the after corner of the house. When his head hit the deck, it was at the for'ard corner of the house, and the Marguerite, Skipper, has got a pretty fair length of house. A pretty fair jolt I call that, Captain Josh, standing to one side and looking at it now in cold blood. As a connosoor yourself now, Skipper, what do you say?"

"Lord in Israel, yes—and then what, Tommie? What about the fellow to looard?"

"Him to looard? He came at me afore I could turn fair around from the cook and hit me with somethin' side the head—a belayin'-pin, I callate. That's where that lump came from. I had to tell some awful good lies to old Spriggs and Harvey to explain that lump and bime-by when you meet them you'll have to sort of return evasive answers—you know, Skipper, not exactly lie, but dodge the truth like—you know. I told 'em I was hit with an axe while tied up in the hold."

"What'd you tell 'em that for?"

"Man, I had to fix up a story for everything on the Marguerite and gettin' started on my story kinder hurried like, on the impulse of the moment as you might say, I had to go through with it."



Clancy

You got to be consistent, Skipper, in everything you do if you want to win out. And when once I'd said a thing to Spriggs—I just had to stick to it or they'd have begun to think maybe that I warn't tellin' the truth, and that wouldn't do, you know. Why, if ever they thought that Tommie Clancy and the French captain was one and the same man!—Good Lord! they'd have the whole British North Atlantic squadron up from winter quarters in Bermuda afore they'd let me get away—yes. Just let old Spriggs get to considerin' the outrage to his dignity—him a representative of the Crown, you know—Good Lord, don't you see, Skipper?"

"That's so. But after that fellow hit you on the head with the axe or belayin'-pin or whatever it was, then what?"

"Well, I went down pretty saggy. But I gets up—as soon's I could—shaking in the wind a little bit I was, but I soon begins to find my head again and when I does I starts for him. He makes another swipe, but this time I dodges and as he goes by I ketches him—and let's him have it—oh, Skipper, but I gives him a full. Right under his port ear I took him, Skipper—look, like that, see?—and he lifted from between the wheel and the cabin hatch to over under her lee rail. By the Lord, Skipper, but it was a dream

Clancy

of a punch, every bit as good as the one I handed the cook, and under the lee rail he goes."

"Solomon's wives! Lucky he didn't go overboard, Tommie?"

"That's what he was. But she's got a pretty high rail the Marguerite has and he stayed aboard. 'Lay there,' says I, and just then she went up on the rocks. For'ard she heaved two or three times—heaved and pounded, with the planks grinding off her and her booms, fore and main both, thrashing the water to looard, and then she keels over and lays down on her side. At that the other fellows who was coming for me turns and flies for the dory over her side amidships. 'Come back and get your dead ones,' I calls after them. It was lookin' desp'rate for the lad under the lee rail, so I picks him up and drops him for'ard of the house beside the cook to wind'ard. The other lad—the one I hit first—had got up himself, and the cook was beginning to know he was alive again, so a couple of them coming back helped the men I'd punched into the dory. I was thinking o' jumping over the stern into the other dory myself, when I happens to think of old Spriggs below in the lazaretto. So I dives below and makes my way 'round in the water in the cabin. She was filling fast, mind, and I had to drag him out when I did find him. He



Clancy

thought I was the French captain all the time, d'y'see. Up to the very second I showed my head through the lazaretto door after driving my boot through before it, he thought I was the French captain—yes, he did. I grabs him, hauls him out, just barely saving two bottles o' cassy on the way. That was presence of mind, Captain Josh. I saved them two bottles o' cassy in the rush—the last case aboard I minded as it was floating 'round on top of the water in the cabin—the water up to our chests—hauls old Spriggs up the cabin steps, drags him out on deck, heaves him into the dory and jumps in on top of him, near breaking his ribs and nigh bursting the bottles besides, and puts off for the harbor where we finds Billie Simms and gets aboard. Billie took us to Good Hope and from there Spriggs took us here. There now, what do you say to that, Captain Josh?"

"Whew-w—" said Captain Joshua.

"Yes, and on the way back here—me rigging up a romance—one with a plot in it—to Collector Spriggs to account for me being aboard the Marguerite. And tryin' to keep Billie Simms in order on the way over while I was telling it and then later tryin' to answer questions from the skipper of the Sleepless. My soul, Captain Josh, but my head's fair buzzin' with the strain

Clancy

of it all! And I'm dry, Skipper, dry, which is very natural, and maybe even a Bible man like yourself will admit it is very proper, too—under the circumstances—under the circumstances, mind. Won't you now? Of course you will—you'd have to be fair-minded, and there being just enough in this bottle—the bottle I saved from the wreck for you—s'pose we have another little touch? What d'y'say now? A little touch to finish the bottle? Oh, Skipper, hush now. Hush—hush. Here you go now, stow that away with the other good stuff gone before—gone but not forgotten. Ain't that good now, Captain Josh? Ain't it? I'll bet. I knew you'd like it. There's lots of things you'd learn to like, Captain Josh, if only you'd let yourself try them. What you want, Captain Josh, is a little more looseness-like in your soul—take the lock off it. You want to be a little more of what they call in Saint Peer the bong vee-vong. Yes, sir, and an able vee-vong you'd make, too, because you've got it in you. And here's to you, Captain Josh, here's to you. Here's hoping you'll load this brig so deep with herrin' that you'll have to plug her scuppers up—and a good market after you get home—skaal, as the Swedes say—slainte, as Tom O'Donnell used to say—prosit, as Dutch Harry used to say—vive, and in the words



Clancy

of four other languages—Chinese, Chinook, Choctaw, and whatever the other was I had in mind—which I don't remember now—Skipper, here's to your damn good health."

"Drink hearty, Tommie, drink hearty, and by the Lord in Israel, Tommie, you're all right."

"No, Skipper, I ain't all right. But I'd like to be and I'm ready to start in right now. If you had a pledge handy now I'd sign—I would—and keep it—yes, sir, keep it."

"I'm condemned, but I believe you would, Tommie."

"I know I would. But we're getting sentimental. Let's get back to earth. How much herrin' do you callate you got up on the scaffold and on deck, Skipper?"

"Oh, maybe a hundred and fifty or two hundred barrels."

"Well, don't you think we'd better be getting 'em below?"

"I dunno. I was callating to let 'em stay a while longer. What do you think?"

"Let 'em stay? Good Lord, no. Get 'em below and make way for others. This bay's full of herrin' right now and I know where they are. I'll tend to them herrin', Skipper, and you turn in and have a kirk for yourself. I know you've

Clancy

been sitting up nights on account of me, but you just forget all that now. I'll have the gang making the tackles sing in ten minutes and don't you worry. Just wait now till I get into my oil-skins and watch them herrin' disappear like ice in the Gulf Stream—yes, sir. Let me see now—where's my oil-skins? Oh, yes, here. So long, Skipper. Turn in now and have a kink for yourself, while I go on deck and take charge."

Up the companion-way went Clancy and soon the creaking and pounding and general hullabaloo from above told the skipper's experienced ear that that able seaman was keeping all hands on the jump.

"And if he does get drunk now and then"—Captain Josh was preparing to turn in for the sleep that Clancy had so soothingly advised him to take—"even if he does, the Lord knows he don't mean no harm by it. And when he does get to work he's good as three. He cert'nly knows his business. Listen to him now."

From the deck came floating down :

"Jer swee le capitaine de la Marguerite,
De la Marguerite, de la Marguerite—
Jer swee le capitaine de la Marguerite,
My Marguerite so belle.

My Marguerite, my Marguerite,
With the face so sweet and waist so neat,



Clancy

And eyes ! Mong doo—her eyes !
Oh, eyes like stars in a well.”

“ Listen to him now.” Captain Joshua kicked off his boots. “ Marguerite, I s’pose, is the last girl he made love to. There he goes again.”

The somewhat husky but ever tuneful baritone went on :

“ Last time I saw my Marguerite—
My Marguerite, my Marguerite—
I said to her, ‘ Cher Marguerite,
You certainly are belle.’
She kisses me, I kisses her,
She coos to me, ‘ Oh, oh, mong coor !’
I holds her tight, says I, ‘ My gem,’
Says she, ‘ Je t’aime, je t’aime, je t’aime !’ ”

“ What in the name o’ Tophet that ‘ Je tem, je tem, je tem,’ is, I don’t know. But, O Lord, what’s the use of trying to keep track of what’s in Tommie’s brain.” From force of habit Captain Joshua took a look at the barometer on the wall. “ Twenty-nine six. There’ll be a breeze soon. But Tommie’ll have everything snug before that comes. Coat o’ Joseph, but he’s off again.”

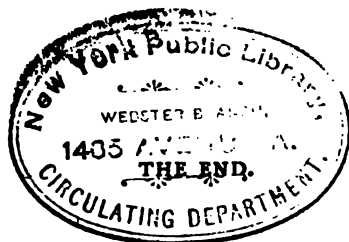
“ And face !—and feet !—
Mong doo !—her feet !
And eyes like stars in a well,
And eyes like stars in a well.”

Clancy

"Them eyes must've been wonders," murmured the skipper of the Tubal Cain. He rolled yet farther into his bunk, turned his face to the side of the vessel, pulled the blanket over his head and decided to forget Clancy and go to sleep; but the last thing he heard before he did finally get to sleep was an even more beatific reference to the wonderful eyes,

"And eyes like stars in a well—oh, hell—
And— eyes— like— stars— in— a— w—e—l—l."

And by that, even though he did not long remain awake to think it out, the master of the Tubal Cain knew that Clancy was himself again.



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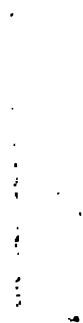




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